

GREAT THOUGHTS for LITTLE THINKERS.

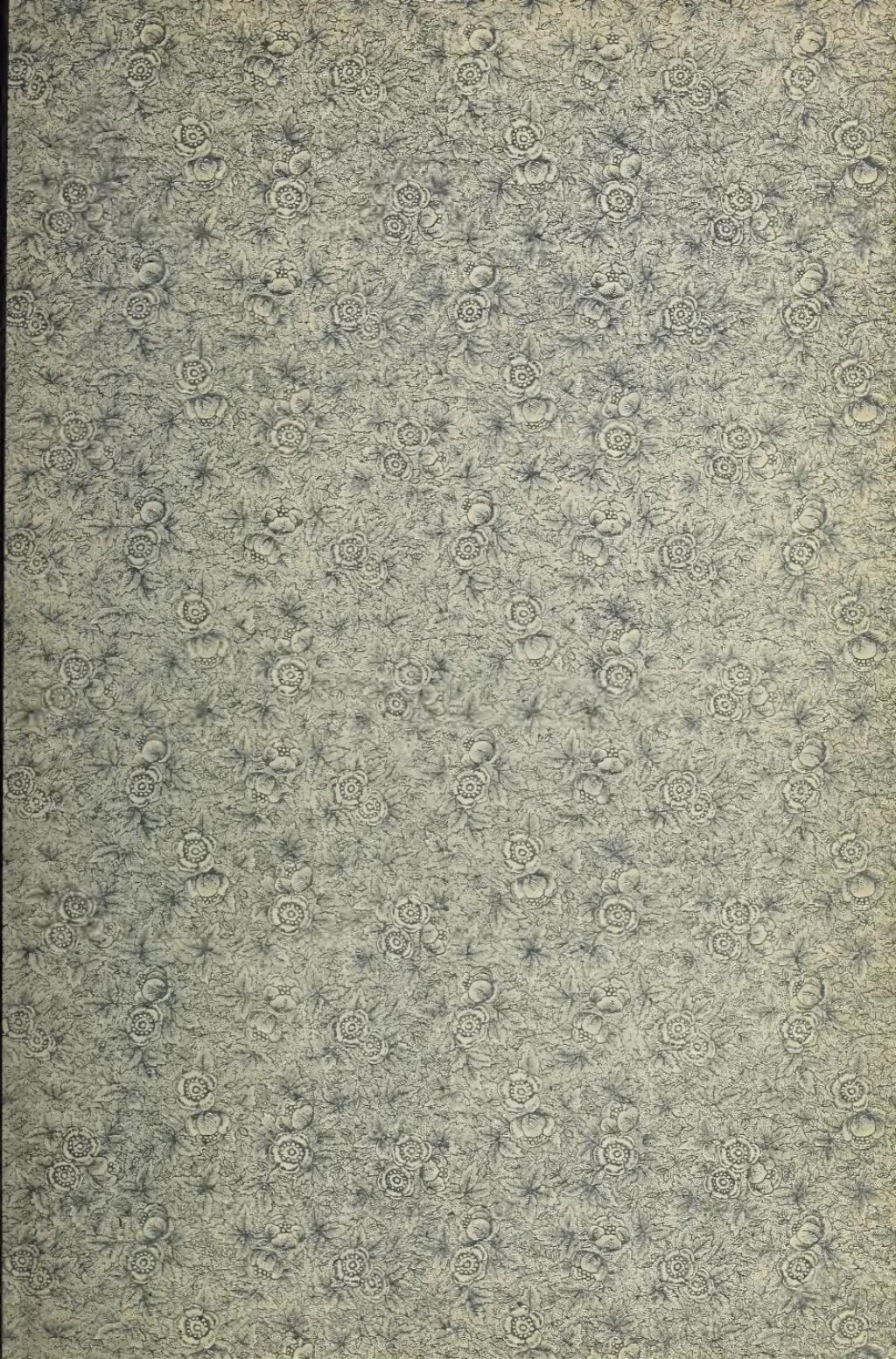


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"LUTHER BURNING THE POPE'S BULL."

Frontispiece.

GREAT THOUGHTS

FOR

LITTLE THINKERS

BY

LUCIA T. AMES

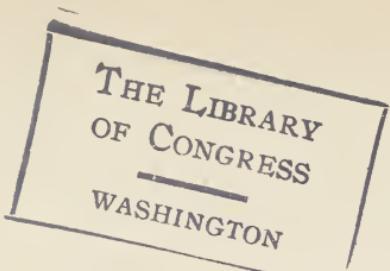


NEW YORK & LONDON

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

The Knickerbocker Press

1889



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1888

Press of
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
New York

Dedicated
TO
MY LITTLE NIECE
CLARA WINIFRED WARE



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GREAT THOUGHTS FOR LITTLE THINKERS.

INTRODUCTION.

IN his recent volume entitled, "The Idea of God," Mr. John Fiske thus describes his earliest conception of the Deity:

"I remember distinctly the conception which I had formed when five years of age. I imagined a narrow office just over the zenith, with a tall standing-desk running lengthwise, upon which lay several open ledgers bound in coarse leather. There was no roof over this office, and the walls rose scarcely five feet from the floor, so that a person standing at the desk could look out on the whole world. There were two persons at the desk, and one of them—a tall, slender man of aquiline features, wearing spectacles, with a pen in his hand and another behind his ear—was God. The other, whose appearance I do not distinctly recall, was an attendant angel. Both were diligently watching the deeds of men, and recording

them in the ledgers. To my infant mind this picture was not grotesque, but ineffably solemn."

That the child's conception was in any way exceptional, few students of child-life would maintain. Indeed, were it possible for us, by a clairvoyance born of sympathy and philosophic insight, to fathom the workings of the imagination in these tiny mortals, "moving about in worlds not realized," we should be startled, perhaps amused, certainly perplexed, at the ideas we should find there not only of God, but of the world and every thing in it.

Yet how naïve and frank the natural, unspoiled child! He chatters all day of his plays and his pets; he pours his childish confidences into our ears, and we, looking into his clear eyes, fancy, with a conceit bred of ignorance, that we read his thoughts like an open book, and see to the depths of his artless nature. But beneath any thought which the child can express in language, or even acknowledge to himself, lie fanciful images, crude ideas, and vague purposes, of which he is himself hardly conscious, and which nevertheless are abiding there, influencing him for good or ill, and to endure perhaps forever. These form the background of his maturer thinking and indelibly color it. Try as he may, never can he wholly free himself from them.

As an illustration of early and untraceable impressions, the writer would adduce the fact that from earliest childhood until now all her mathematical

processes, all thoughts of ages or dates have been based on a scheme of numbers which presented themselves to the imagination as arranged on a definite system of lines and angles rising to different altitudes. The distinct consciousness that this system of numbers was different from that conceived by other minds was not discovered until mature years. Dating from some subtile and unremembered influences, it has now become ineradicably woven into the very fabric of thought.

We are gradually coming to see that in all departments of pedagogical science none require more genius, none are of so profound import, as those that first point out to the awakening mind the lines of beauty and duty which it henceforth must follow, and that supply materials for the imagination, unmixed with scientific or religious error which all the acquired knowledge of ripe age can never wholly eradicate.

Probably there was never a time when the problem of early religious training was so perplexing. The age of catechisms and definite, dogmatic teaching offered few dilemmas such as now present themselves to the conscientious parent or teacher who, while awakening to the results of this age of searching criticism, is at the same time imbued with that spirit of reverence which marks all deeply spiritual life. Such a one is frequently confronted in the pert child of the present day with an incipient scepticism engendered by indifference to Divine and parental

authority, which seems to be the inevitable outcome of our national vice of self-assertiveness.

He himself may remember the stern Puritanical teaching of his childhood, which, in spite of its narrowness in regard to plenary inspiration and the literal interpretation of the Bible, did inculcate a spirit of reverence and conscientiousness, and a profound sense of responsibility too often wanting in the modern child. And in what way these most priceless results of all teaching shall be impressed upon his child, born into a peculiarly pleasure-loving and self-indulgent age, becomes to him a question of paramount importance.

Shall he, abandoning the older and sterner phraseology, yet from some superstitious belief in its moral efficacy, allow his child to receive the same crude teachings which were given him ? Or shall he permit him to receive none but home instruction, and keeping him carefully ignorant of all doctrinal questions and perplexing Hebrew history, instruct him in moral truths until an age when spiritual truths may be spiritually discerned, and early materialistic conceptions thus be avoided ? Shall he on the other hand, courageously grapple with the increasingly perplexing problems of our day, not daring to withhold any truth from his child which he himself believes and which is fitted for the child's comprehension ? If the last be his choice, as we trust it may be, how shall this home instruction be harmonized with such Sunday-

school teaching as gives the child to understand that Satan created sin, and that there was never a rainbow before the flood ; or which teaches Old Testament and New Testament history in rapid alternation, before the first principles of geography or general history have been learned, thus giving the child fragmentary and confused notions, and so making it possible for a bright little girl of the writer's acquaintance to imagine that Jerusalem is not far from New York, and to place Hezekiah after Paul, in point of time, because the lesson on the king came shortly after that on the apostle ? Conversely, how shall the Sunday-school teacher instruct when erroneous views are inculcated in the home ?

How shall children be made to feel the profoundness of spiritual truths independent of their historic setting ? How shall the essential be presented apart from the non-essential ? These, and similar problems, peculiar to our time, are confronting an ever increasing number of parents and teachers, too often, alas, finding no solution on account of their timidity, indifference, or incompetence.

In many a Christian family the one hour in a week of Sunday-school songs and lessons constitutes the only definite religious instruction which the children ever receive. Memorizing Scripture is unfortunately becoming obsolete. Blackboard sketches with colored crayons and "lesson helps" of all sorts are taking the place of study. Picnics and Christmas trees,

silk banners, jingling tunes, and other devices, are necessarily resorted to in the endeavor to entice the children of the present day to give their attention to any thing serious.

That the Sunday-school is a noble institution and is doing a grand work, no observant person will deny. But even under the best possible system of instruction the Sunday-school alone is wholly inadequate for the religious education; and small excuse can the Christian parent offer for neglecting to inform himself as to the teaching which his children receive there and wisely supplementing it.

The solicitude shown by many parents in the selection of a French master competent to impart a correct accent, or of a music teacher who shall have proper ideas of touch, is in striking contrast to the indifference with which they resign their children to the spiritual teachings of any immature girl or half-educated person whose good intentions are apparent, but who has little capacity for the difficult task.

The age furnishes many evidences of the disastrous effects on mature minds gradually awakening to the fact that many cherished beliefs of childhood, round which were linked the most sacred memories, must be relinquished. Sad indeed is the fact that the gold and dross of thought having been once amalgamated, can never be disunited but by the furnace fires of doubt and suffering; sadder still the knowledge that when man's tradition has been taken for

God's truth, the truth itself has been discredited when the tradition is found to be but a tradition.

The present volume has had a natural genesis. It has grown out of a desire to help one dear little child, whose quaint fancies and crude conceptions had lain all unexpressed until elicited by careful, questioning, to the amazement and frequent amusement of the writer, who has become convinced after a careful search through current juvenile literature that there is a need for something which shall supplement the home and school instruction for young children.

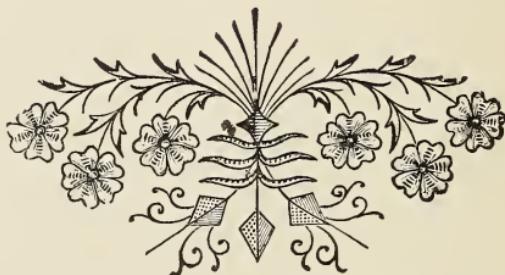
While recognizing the fact that early religious instruction, unlike teaching in mathematics or science, must generally be presented in an authoritative way without giving all the grounds for the statements made, the endeavor has been to teach only that which the rational mind would verify when mature years were reached.

Having specially in mind the children of fair-minded parents of all Protestant denominations, the writer has omitted for the most part those Bible stories which they will be sure to learn elsewhere, and such doctrinal teaching as should be reserved for later years, and then presented in the form which each parent thinks best.

With a profound appreciation of the difficulties involved, the attempt has been made to present in as simple language and as definite form as possible,

an outline of those fundamental truths in science, history, religion, and morals which shall be a basis for all later thought, with the hope that however inadequate, it may at least serve as a stepping-stone to something better than was taught most of the children of the previous generation.

L. T. A.





CHAPTER I.

WHAT LITTLE THINKERS WONDER ABOUT.

I ONCE heard a little girl say: "O I hate to have the people who write books say: 'Now my dear little readers!'" Perhaps you feel just as she did, so I shall try to be very particular never once to call you "a dear little reader." But whether you are a little reader or not, I am sure you are a little thinker, and I hope you will not care if I call you that, for I want to tell you a great deal about thinkers and thoughts which I have found very delightful. You see, in spite of the pictures, this is not a story-book—not a book of those charming tales which you like to read over and over again, and with which you cuddle down in the corner of the sofa and keep as still as a mouse for an hour.

No, I will tell you truly in the beginning, this book is neither a Sunday-school book nor a day-school book, nor a story-book, and will not be very funny or exciting, and not at all the kind of book which I want you to sit down and read straight through from beginning to end, and then lay aside.

What I would like is to have some one read a few pages to you at a time, and let you think about them a little before going on.

Probably you all go to Sunday-school and have begun to learn about a great many things which you find rather hard to understand.

No doubt some of you have learned little verses, such as "God is love," and "Blessed are the peacemakers," from that big book called the Bible, out of which the minister reads every Sunday. Of course all of you can say the Lord's Prayer, and have heard a good deal about Some One with whom you are not yet well acquainted, and who, you hear, is your best friend. But still I suppose there are very many things which you hear grown people say about God, and about church, and the Bible that are not very interesting to you, and you cannot understand how any one can really like to talk about them.

You see I know how you feel, because I used to feel just so myself when I was a little girl. But after a great while I learned something which I wish to tell you; it was that as I grew older and understood better I came to enjoy many things which at first I felt sure I could never like. When I was a baby, and liked to play with bright ribbons and blocks, I suppose I thought it very queer to see the older children laugh at the black marks on white paper which they called "funny stories." I must have thought it would be no fun for me to

spend an hour looking at a book, for it would have meant nothing to me.

So when I grew older and began to learn about the great world in which we live; and of the names of cities in far-away countries, and the languages that the little French and German boys speak, I thought, at first, I should never like to know about them. I cared more to read the "Prudy" books or some nice fairy story; but every year, as time went on, I kept finding that the things I had at first thought very tiresome were delightful after all. And so I hope you will find it, in the little talks we are going to have together at bedtime, and on Sunday afternoons, when the playthings and lessons are put away, and you all gather around me for a little quiet talk about the great thoughts which have helped the world, and which I am sure little thinkers such as you can understand.

First of all, I want to tell you a very strange thing; every year, as you do more and more thinking, every thing in the world will seem more and more wonderful to you. Now you would expect it to be just the other way; you would think a little baby coming into the world and finding all things new and strange would be very much surprised at every thing at first, and after a while would grow so used to things that when he was grown up he would no longer wonder at any thing. Perhaps it is so with savage people or very stupid persons, who

never think ; but with those who learn and think, the wonder always grows.

Little children do not wonder much about things ; they take them all for granted ; and it is only after they have lived many years that they begin to find out how very wonderful are the dewdrops, and the leaves, and bits of coal, and all the common, every-day things.

What do you think is the most wonderful thing ever made ? Eleanor answers : "A watch" ; Harry says : "A steam-engine." Not a bit of it. The most wonderful thing in the world is a *thinker*, that is to say, a human being. The dirtiest, ugliest little beggar-boy you ever saw is far more wonderful than Niagara Falls, or the ocean, or a grand cathedral.

Did you ever think how strange it is that the milk and meat, apples, puddings, and other good things that we eat, turn into our bones, blood, finger-nails, and hair, into eyes that see and ears that hear ? Have you thought what makes your heart beat right along every day and every night, when you are asleep and when you are awake, all through your life ? Perhaps you have heard some Bible stories about miracles ; but there never was any miracle more wonderful than this, and the reason it does not seem so is that it happens every day.

Doubtless all the little folks to whom I am talking are old enough to have begun to wonder. You wonder how large the stars are, and what they are

made of; you wonder how the world was made, how the first animals looked,—how the first baby looked; and if you are a very little girl, perhaps you wonder if this baby had a little crib and bath-tub, and wore pretty white dresses like your baby brother. Sometimes you ask mamma about these things, and she says, perhaps: "Run away, now, pet, I am too busy to answer," or "You are not old enough yet to understand"; or, perhaps, if the question is a very queer one, your big brother laughs and calls you a "little goosie," and you feel hurt and do not dare to ask the next time.

You see I remember how I used to feel when I was a little girl; and so, as I am not too busy, and as I like little boys and girls who wonder about things and ask questions, I am going to tell you of some of the things I used to wonder about. Sometimes I asked questions, and had the right answer, and sometimes the wrong one; and I never found out until I grew up what the true answer was, and so I got very queer and foolish ideas, which took me a long time to unlearn.

In the next talk I will tell you about the very first thing that ever happened.



CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED.

I SUPPOSE you have been told many times that God created you and every thing else in the world also. Now do you know what the word *create* means? It means *to make something out of nothing*.

When you hear people say: "God created," it means that He simply thought something, and it was instantly made.

If you wanted to make a kite, would you "create" one? Let us see. You would get some paper and sticks and paste, and put them together in the shape you wanted, and thus make a kite; but you could not make either the sticks or the paper! They were made for you by some one else. You did not "create" the kite, because you did not make it out of nothing. We cannot do this.

Only God can create. He makes every thing simply by thinking, because His thinking is different from our thinking. This is very wonderful, and even grown people do not understand it very well;

but we know it is so, for we see it could not be any other way.

You have been told that God never sleeps, and this is true. He is always thinking; and, as He creates things by thinking, He must always be creating.

This is one of the things about which I used to wonder when I was a little girl. I supposed that God was asleep, or at least that He kept quiet for a great while, and then made up His mind that He would make the world; and so He spoke, and at once the earth was made, and afterwards the stars and the sun and moon.

Some people think so now, but it is a mistake. We know that God is the same all the time. He never changes; so that it could not have been possible for Him to have been quiet a great many years, and then all of a sudden have changed and begun to create. He has always been creating, and the stars we see in the sky at night were made before the earth on which we live began to be.

When you grow older you will understand how we know that the stars were made first. At present it would be hard to make you understand it. But there is one thing I can tell you about the stars that you can understand. These bright little things in the sky that seem so small, are really a great deal larger than the earth; the reason why they *look* so small is because they are so very far away, just as a

boy who is a mile off looks no larger than a pin when you hold it out at arm's length.

Did you ever notice how the whole room is lighted the instant some one touches a blazing match to the gas? We say "quick as a flash," for a flash of light is the quickest thing we know. I remember going into the country on Decoration Day, and standing on a hill where I could look a long way off. I saw a procession winding along the road to the cemetery. All at once there was a flash and a puff of smoke, and after waiting long enough to count ten or twelve, the noise of the report came, and I knew the people had been firing a cannon over the soldiers' graves. They did it again and again, and every time I saw the flash some time before I heard the sound, and then I remembered how I had learned that light travels a great deal faster than sound.

Perhaps you will think I have forgotten what I began to say about the stars, but I have not. Now that I have shown you how fast the light travels, I want to give you a little idea of how far away some of the stars are. Only listen to this. The star-light which will shine down upon us to-night started a long while ago, before your father or your grandfather was born, and has been travelling like lightning all these years, and yet has only just reached the earth! Of course you cannot imagine this or picture it to yourself, no one can, but we know it is true.

Some wise men have made a curious instrument called a telescope, and when you look through it the stars, and sun, and moon seem much nearer and plainer to you, just as your mamma's opera-glass makes the people across the street seem nearer. These wise men have worked hard for many years, and have sat up all night in high, cold towers studying with their telescopes the far-away, shining worlds that we call the stars. Then they print what they have learned in books and papers, so we may know about it too.

God has always been creating, and is creating now. The worlds of which I have been telling you were not created all solid and round in an instant. It took a great many thousand years to form them into the shape which they now have.

The more we study God's ways of making the world, the more we shall see that He works very slowly, not creating things *complete* all at once, but letting them form slowly and grow gradually from one form to a higher and more perfect one; just as a little shoot grows into a large tree and a weak little baby into a strong man.

Perhaps you think if God works so slowly it cannot be creation. Yes, it is creation; we cannot call it by any other name. For nothing makes itself or grows of itself. God's spirit is behind every thing and in every thing, making it grow. He makes all things in the beginning, and is constantly changing them and making them take new forms, or "develop," as we say.

I said I would tell you in this chapter the first thing that ever happened. I think you have found out what it is. The first thing was God's creating something out of nothing. But, you remember, I said He was *always* creating, so it is hardly correct to say that He did any thing "first."

There never was any beginning or any "first" with Him. Do not get puzzled about this, or tire your little heads by trying to imagine it or picture it to yourself. No one ever can *imagine* it, but we can *think* it, and know that it must be so. There are a great many things that we cannot imagine at all, but we can think, and reason, and know about them, and this is one of those things.





CHAPTER III.

HIDDEN FORCES.

SOME of the worlds that were created, and which we see in the sky, are bright, burning suns, just like our sun. Others are like the earth, which was once fire but now has become cold and hard, at least on the outside, so that men can live on it. Probably some are like the moon, which has no water, and is a cold, barren place, where it is not likely that any one lives.

No doubt you all have heard that the earth is round like a ball, and not flat, as in old times it was thought to be.

We know it is round, because people have sailed round it and come back to the place they started from, just as a tiny ant walks around your brother's big football, and comes back to the spot where he started, reaching it from the opposite side of the ball.

There are other reasons why we know that the earth is shaped like a ball, but I will not wait to talk about them now. Of course it is very hard at

first for us to think of the world as round, for it looks flat, but we shall find, as we go on learning, that *almost every thing is different from what it seems to be at first.*

I used to wonder why it was that the people on the other side of the earth did not fall off. I thought their heads would be down and their feet would be up, and it was a long time before I understood about it. I am afraid the little people who have not begun to study geography will not understand about it, but I will do my best to explain.

When you see a horse draw a heavy wagon, you know there is power, or force, in the horse's body ; when you throw a ball, you do it by the power that is in your arm ; when you see a man rowing a boat against the stream, you know he does it by the same kind of force or power. This kind of power is very common, and we can see and understand it perfectly well.

But the strongest forces in the world are the hidden forces—that is, those we cannot see. These lift the greatest weights and draw the greatest burdens.

When water freezes, it swells and takes up more room than it did before, and sometimes when a little water drips down into a crack in a great rock, it freezes, and the force which it uses in swelling and making more room for itself is so great that it bursts the rock into pieces, which crash down the mountain side, cutting down trees and destroying every thing

in the way. It might have taken the strength of a hundred men to break the rock in two and do what the water did simply by freezing. This is what I call a "hidden force."

Another hidden force is in the growing plants. Those who study a great deal about plants have found out some wonderful things. They have fastened a great many pounds of heavy weights to squashes and watermelons and other green, growing things, in such a way that if the plant grew, and spread outward and upward, it would have lifted these heavy weights, and they have found that the lifting force in these little tender-looking stems was so great one could hardly believe it; sometimes they would lift a greater weight than a horse could bear.

There is another wonderful hidden force which I think you have heard of, although it has quite a long, hard name. But you need not be afraid of long words; if you only understand what they mean they are just as easy to use as short ones. You know it is quite as easy to talk about an elephant as a cow, although the word "elephant" is a long one.

Well, the name of this strong hidden force of which I speak is *electricity*. You have all seen electric lights, and heard of the telegraph, and have perhaps spoken through the telephone. These marvellous things, which are such a help to us that we hardly know how we could get on without them,

are all due to the wonderful electric fluid, which we can neither smell, nor see, nor hear.

It moves as fast as lightning, and in fact it is what causes lightning. It can do a great deal of harm to people who meddle with it without knowing how to use it, but to those who do know how to use it, it is like a good horse who goes just where he is driven.

There are a great many other hidden forces, and one of the strongest of these is the one which compels every thing on the earth to get as near to the ground as possible. You know when you drop a ball, or a book, or any thing, it never flies up to the sky, but falls as near the earth as it can. Of course you have always known this, but perhaps you never thought much about it. This is one of the things which wise men think very wonderful ; but children never think it strange, because they have not learned that the commonest things are the most wonderful.

Now this strong power draws every thing to the earth and makes it impossible for any one to fall off it or to get away from it. If it were not for this strange power drawing every thing, especially heavy things, down to the earth, loose things would stay up in the air as easily as down on the ground.

The reason balloons and light, fleecy clouds do not fall to the earth, is that they are lighter than the air, and the air crowds down and pushes them up out of the way. When the clouds get black and

heavy and weigh more than the air, they fall down to the earth and break up into little streams and drops of water, and we call it "rain."

I have been telling you all this, partly because it is one of the "Great Thoughts" which you "Little Thinkers" can understand, although it took wise people many years to think it all out, and partly because I want to have you see that the little Chinese boys and girls on the other side of the world walk upon the ground and look up to the sky above them just as we do, even though their feet are turned toward our feet and their heads and ours point in opposite directions.

When we say "down" it means simply toward the earth, and when we say "up" it means away from the earth.

This great power that draws every thing so strongly toward the centre of the earth, is the same kind of power which holds the stars and sun and moon in their places; for each one draws the other, and as each star is drawn on all sides by the other stars all around it, it is kept in its place.

Is it not wonderful that these great, shining worlds, which are so far off that they look like mere specks, should be able to send out this strange hidden force through all the millions and millions of empty miles that separate one from another?

I am sure that by this time all my Little Thinkers must have begun to wonder a great deal. I hope

you have a great many questions to ask, and will be sure to tell them to papa or mamma, and see if you cannot find out a great many new things this week about the strong, hidden forces of which I have told you a little.





CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE EARTH WAS MADE READY FOR US.

I ONCE asked a bright little girl seven years old, what she supposed was the very first thing which was made on the earth after the earth itself was made, and she promptly replied: "Sidewalks!"

I tried not to laugh at this funny answer, and inquired if *men* did not have to be made first in order to make the sidewalks. I then asked what people lived on while they were beginning to make sidewalks and other things, and she said: "O they had bread and butter that they could buy at the store."

You see it was very hard for her to think back to a time when there were no stores to sell flour, no flour to make bread, no mills to grind wheat, no men to gather wheat, and no wheat to be ground. When, in short, there was nothing but land and water.

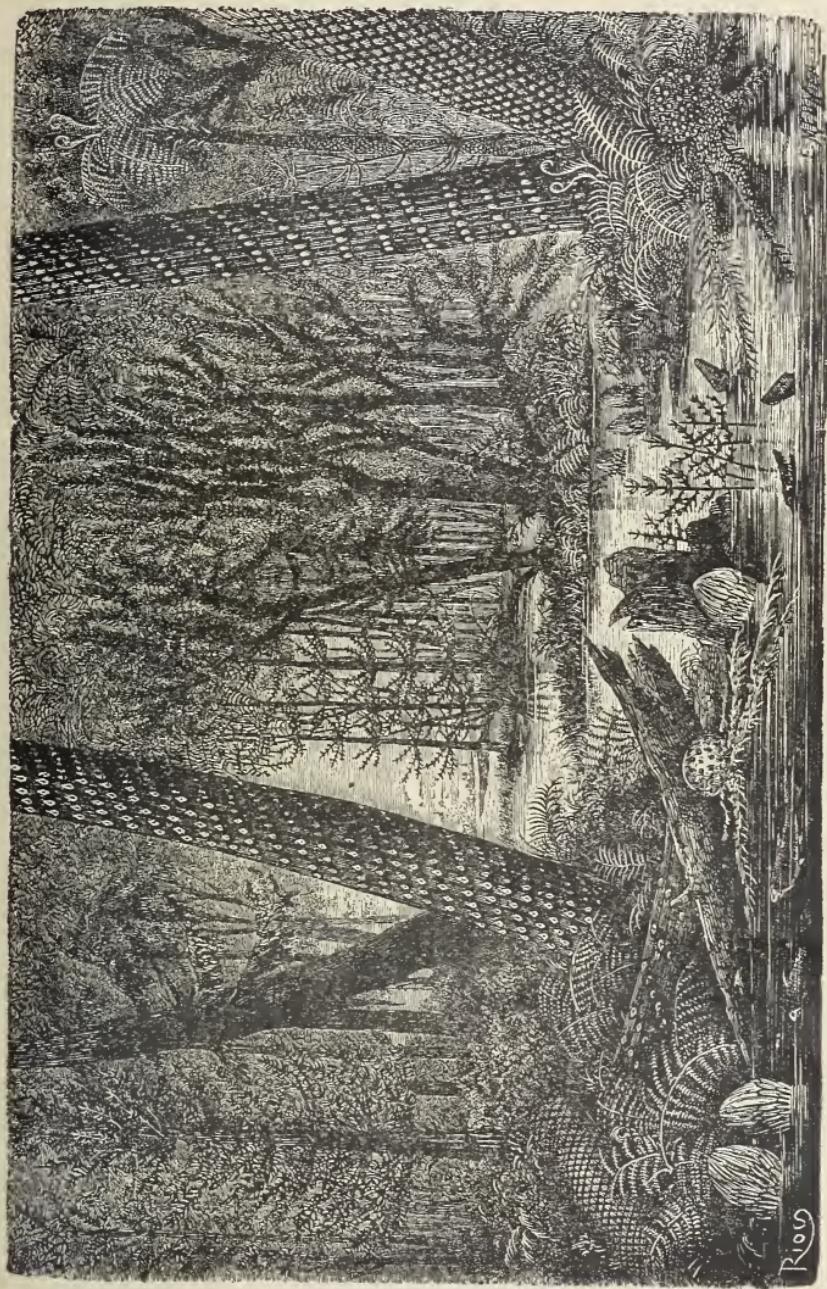
Now I want to help you to try and think back to this time when, after the sun and stars had been made, our earth, which is so much smaller than they, began its wonderful history. It has taken thousands of years to find out the little that we know about it.

Many things that happened away back in that far-off time we shall never know, but what we have learned is very interesting and important, for it makes us understand our own life better, and, more than that, it helps us to get better acquainted with the great Maker of all things, and to find out how He lives and works. When we learn about the things which He has made, we are, as a great man said, "thinking God's thoughts after Him."

After the earth had finally become a round mass, and was travelling on its yearly course around the sun, it was all the while being made ready for a home for us. But slowly, slowly, very slowly, the changes came. It took millions of years before it was ready.

If we could have been in the world in that far-away time, we should have seen very strange sights. Many of the places which now are covered with fertile fields and villages and towns were then under water, and the salt sea ebbed and flowed where they now are.

Before there were any animals the plant life began. Many kinds of plants were different from those that we see now. Very large ferns, as tall as trees, covered much of the country, and huge trees, like the pines and palms, made thick forests. Do you know what became of them? It was such a very strange thing that if you have not been told you never can guess it. Many of these trees and plants which



FOREST IN THE COAL PERIOD.

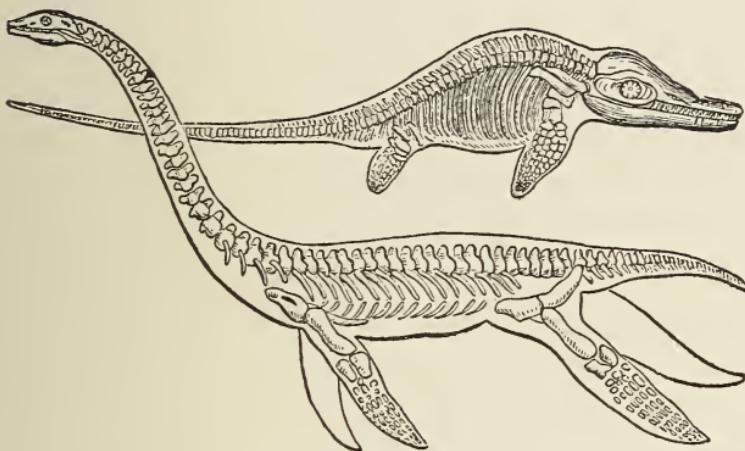
grew so thickly together fell, and in course of time were pressed down tight upon one another, and in some of the curious changes which the earth went through, they were covered with water, or earth and stones, which kept the air from them, and after a while they were changed into coal. All the coal-beds lying underground in so many parts of the world, and which are so useful to us, were once green, growing plants and trees. All this change took more time than we can possibly imagine.

It is very hard even for a grown man to imagine what a long time one million years is, and when we say many millions, no one can possibly imagine it; but, as I said before, there are many things, and some of them are the most important ones, that we can know, even if we cannot imagine them.

Wise men who have studied about the growth and history of the earth, do not all agree about the order in which the different kinds of animal life began. We think it is very certain, however, that what we call the lowest forms of life—the sponges, oysters, and fishes—came first. After that came insects, snakes, and slimy, crawling things, and later came the birds and the four-legged animals.

Many of these creatures that lived all those years before men came on the earth were larger than elephants, or any animals living in our times. Sometimes their bones are dug up, and we can see what huge and terrible creatures they must have been.

When I was a little girl I saw in a museum the bones of a great animal which was ninety feet long. The bones had changed and were as hard as stone, and some of them were missing, but there were enough to show what kind of a creature he was, and it made one shiver to think what a horrid monster he must have been when he was alive.



STRANGE ANIMALS THAT LIVED BEFORE MAN.

Until a few years ago we knew almost nothing about what happened on this earth before men lived here ; but since your grandpapa was a little boy many hundreds of men in different parts of the world have been studying the habits of plants and animals. They have examined the stars with their telescopes, and the flowers with their microscopes ; they have studied the winds and the clouds, the rocks, the rivers, and the mountains, and so have found out many secrets which lay hidden out of sight for untold ages.

Each one found out a few new facts, and as soon as he had done so he told them to the world, and so, in a short time, more things were discovered than had ever been known before in all the thousands of years since men had begun to wonder about this wonderful world.

Some parts of the earth used to be much warmer than they are now. The lion and elephant and other animals that you have seen in the circus processions, and which live in warm countries, used to live farther north than we do, where now it is cold. We are sure of this because their bones are often found there in the ground and in caves.

After a while, however, the climate began to grow much colder, the animals went farther south, and the country where we live was all covered with ice. Sometimes we find deep scratches on the rocks which we know were made when this great sheet of ice came from the north and covered the country. It took thousands of years for this ice to disappear.

We do not know in what part of the earth men lived first. Perhaps they began to live in several different parts at once. We know very little about the first people who lived on the earth, only we are very sure they were almost as low down as some of the higher animals.

We feel pretty sure that the higher kinds of animals came from lower kinds of animal life, and these, in their turn, from still lower forms; so we

think it likely that creatures were gradually and slowly changed from the highest kind of an animal, which was possibly somewhat like an ape, into the form of body which we now have. Instead of walking on four legs, they learned to stand upright and to do many things which animals cannot do. At last, when the right time had come, God put into these bodies spirits like His own because they can live forever. And so men came to be on this earth and were children of God, though it was a long time before they knew much about their Father.

The mind of man grew slowly, and after a while he came to know himself and to think of himself as different from other creatures. He invented *language*, and this was the beginning of his life as a spirit.

Let us stop a moment now and look back over these millions of years and think once again of the slow, wonderful changes by which the earth was made ready for us.

First, the crust, or outside, slowly grew hard and cold ; the seas were slowly formed, and then came the beginnings of plant life by which the world was prepared for the animals. For, of course, animals could not have lived unless plants had first been made for them to feed upon.

Then came the different grades of animals, beginning with those that have very little feeling, like sponges, clams, and oysters, and after that going on

to fishes and creeping things that have bones, and eyes, and the power to move about from place to place. You can easily see that these are much higher than clams and oysters and snails.

Then came the still more intelligent animals, and, last of all, when the world had been made ready for man's body, and his body had been made ready for his spirit, there came that new creature, the highest and most wonderful of all, a being who could think and talk and make inventions, one who had the power to know God and who was to live forever.

It almost takes one's breath away to make this quick jump over all these long ages.

Thousands of men have worked hard all their lives and suffered much in order to find out and give to us these great secrets about the world and man. Thousands of books have been written about these things, and I have tried to tell you a little about them in a simple way, so that you shall begin to get right ideas about the world, and about God and man, and not fill your heads with queer notions of your own which you will have to unlearn when you are older.





CHAPTER V.

HOW THE FIRST PEOPLE LIVED.

THERE are several ways by which we find out how men used to live, ages ago, before they knew how to write and kept records of what they did.

One way is to learn how the wild savages live now. There are many such people in the world, and by studying their habits, we learn how men always live before they become civilized.

Another way to learn about the early peoples, is to study the bones and bits of earthen dishes and stone arrow-heads and other things they have left, which we often find buried in the ground in such places that we know they must have belonged to those who lived thousands of years ago.

We suppose that, at first, men lived much like animals, eating raw meat and fruit with their fingers, and sleeping on the ground out-doors or in caves.

They probably lived first in warm countries and did not need much clothing. It is supposed that they did not live in separate families, as we do, but

all lived more like animals, who do not care much for their little ones after they get old enough to take care of themselves.

People knew very little about what was right and wrong, and used to quarrel and fight and kill each other somewhat as animals do.



VASE FOUND IN AN ANCIENT TOMB IN PERU.

The men were larger and stronger than the women, and so it came about that among these ignorant people the women were often looked down upon and treated like slaves. For thousands and thousands of years men thought women were not of so much importance as they were themselves, and, because they were large and strong, they had their own way and did many unjust and selfish things.

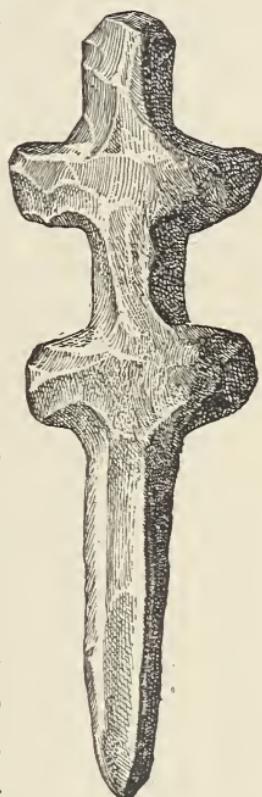
It was only after they came to know about the

true God and to learn how much more He cares for our spirits than our bodies, that men began to find out that a sweet, lovely spirit, although it were in a poor, weak body, is more beautiful in the eyes of God than any thing else. After men had come to learn the law of love, they found that many a tender, patient mother might be nobler than a great general who had won famous battles.

At first there were no knives, or tools, or any thing made of iron. The only things that men had to cut with were sharp pieces of flint and other kinds of stone. They chipped these into the shape of arrow-heads and fastened them on the end of sticks and used them for spears.

For very many years men had no tools but these stone ones, and so we call this the Stone Age. A great many of these stone knives and arrow-heads have been found. I have seen hundreds of them myself. Sometimes they are so rough you can hardly tell them from a common stone that you might find in some rocky pasture. Others are better made, and some are smooth and polished.

These sharp stones that would cut, were the great-



ANCIENT FLINT
INSTRUMENT FROM
NEW JERSEY.

est treasures a man could have. Without them he could not kill any animals and so get meat to eat and skins to wear ; he could not clean the skins without something sharp to scrape them with. He could not cut down trees to make poles for his tents ; and in fact he could do almost nothing until he had made something that would cut.

Animals have hair or fur on their backs, but man has nothing to cover him until he makes it for himself. Animals have teeth, and claws, and horns given them for defending themselves when they are attacked ; but man has nothing with which to fight until he makes it. You see human beings are very helpless until they learn how to make tools and use them.

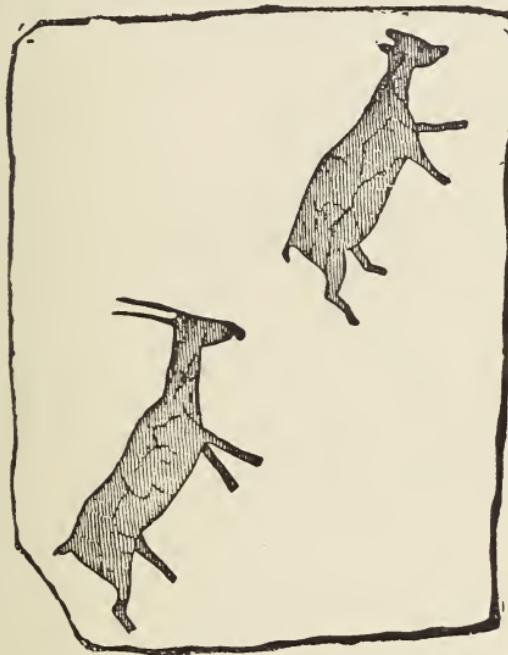
The world is full of so many comfortable and convenient things now that it is very hard for us to imagine how different it must have seemed to these poor, ignorant people.

If some one could have taught them, I suppose they would have learned almost as quickly as we can. But there was no one to teach them. They had to find out every thing for themselves, and so they did not know nearly so much about most things as a little child four years old knows now.

After a while some one learned how to make fire, and that was a great gain. Probably it was the most important discovery ever made.

They also learned to tame wild goats and cattle, which then gave them milk. You know all animals were wild at first. It was a long time before horses and cows and dogs became tame, so that they would live with men and work for them.

After a time people learned to plant seeds and to



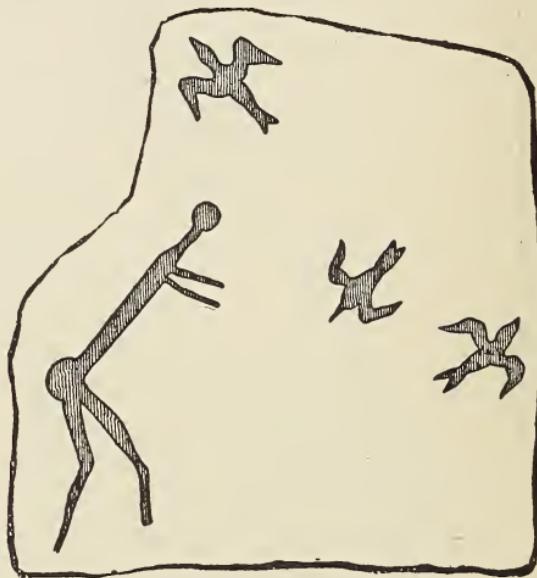
ROCK SCULPTURES [MADE BY SAVAGES IN SOUTH AFRICA].

raise crops of grain. They ground the grain into flour or meal of a coarse sort, by means of a little hand-mill made of stone, and then mixed it with water, and, as they had learned how to make fire, they could bake it into cakes.

Their food was very coarse and simple. They

had no sugar until a later time, and of course they never dreamed of all the nice things that we have to eat.

They found iron, and tin, and copper, and bright shining gold in the earth. After a long, long time they learned how to melt these and make them into different shapes. Then they no longer needed the



ROCK SCULPTURES FROM SOUTH AFRICA.

rough stone hatchets and spears, for they made much better ones out of metal.

They made pots and dishes out of moist clay, and baked them hard and dry. A great many broken pieces of these have been found. Sometimes they have been colored black, or red, or yellow, and have wavy lines or dots on them.

Sometimes pieces of bone, with rude carvings of animals, have been found buried in the ground, and we learn from them that the people who lived so long ago were not satisfied with just getting enough to eat and drink and wear ; they liked pretty things



BEADS OF GOLD FOUND IN PERU.

also. They used the gold which they found for making rings and necklaces. Several of the beads that you see in the picture are very pretty, and show that those who made them had good taste.

As time went on, and people found they could get food and clothing much easier than at first, they had

more time for other work, and so they discovered many new things.

With their new hatchets they could cut down trees much easier than with their old stone knives, and so they made rafts and boats out of the trees. In these they could travel quickly from one place to another, and could bring home in their boats whatever they had found. This, of course, saved time, and was much easier than walking and carrying things on their backs.

As time went on they learned to use wheels, and found them a great help in getting over the ground quickly whenever there was a good road ; but as there were very few good roads, people usually were carried on the backs of camels or mules.

The first kind of clothing that was worn was made of the skins of animals. Afterwards, people learned how to make cloth out of the wool that comes from the backs of sheep ; and a long time after that they learned how to make cloth out of cotton.

By this time men had learned that there were so many different kinds of things to do, no one man could do them all.

At first every man had done every thing for himself, just as an animal does. He wore no clothes, and lived out-doors, and had nothing to do but get raw food. Now that people were not satisfied with this, and needed a great many more things, the work had to be divided.

Some men made spears and arrows, while others found the iron and gold. Some men took care of the cattle and flocks, and others made boats or went hunting or fishing, or made tents or built rude huts.

The women spun the wool into cloth, and ground the corn between two stones. They also cooked the food, and made the dishes and pots out of clay, and plaited rushes into baskets.

Then each man exchanged the things that he had made for those which others had made ; that is, the man who made arrow-heads made a great many more than he wanted for himself, and so he gave away those that he did not want in return for meat, and clothes, and other things that he needed.

In the course of time men found out that they would save a great deal of time and trouble if they could get something that would have the same value as the things which they made but would be small and could be easily carried.

So they learned how to use money. This was a very great improvement. I will show you why. Suppose a man has a great deal more milk than he wants, and he needs some wool and eggs. He starts off with his milk put up in bottles, or bags made of goat-skin, and goes to the man who has eggs to sell. After he gets all the eggs that he wants, and leaves some milk to pay for it, he goes on, two or three miles farther, perhaps, to the man who has wool to sell. Now, if the man who had eggs to sell and all

the other people near by who wanted milk but had no wool, had taken the milk and paid him money, it would have been very easy for him to put the money into his pocket and get rid of his load of milk. But no, he must trudge on and carry it to the man who has wool. Perhaps he spills the milk on the way, or it is a hot day and it gets sour, or, when he comes to the man with the wool he finds that he does not want any milk; then he cannot get his wool after all. Now if he had money, the man would very gladly have sold his wool. Money will not spoil if it is kept, as milk and eggs and other things will; and as it is not very heavy to carry, and does not take up much room, it is very convenient to use.

The money was made of gold or silver, or something that was precious and rare. If it had been made of stone or any thing that was common, each man could have made all the money he wanted for himself, and then it would not have been worth any thing.

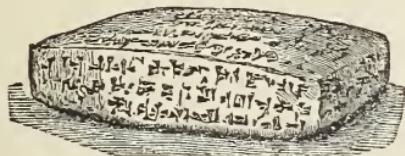




CHAPTER VI.

THE WORLD GROWS OLDER AND WISER.

After many years, people wished to write down a record of some of the things that had happened. First, they carved pictures in the rocks. Afterward they invented a queer kind of writing, in which the words were not spelled out, as our words are, but were made partly of pictures and signs rudely drawn. Sometimes the writing was picked out in tablets or rolls of soft, moist clay, which were then baked dry until they were as hard as brick.



CLAY TABLET, ON WHICH IS WRITTEN A STORY OF A KING
[Found in Babylonia].

In the last few years we have learned a great deal about these very old writings, for some of them have been dug up from the places where they had lain buried many feet under ground for thousands of years.

You know the earth's surface changes a little every year. Perhaps you have noticed how short a time

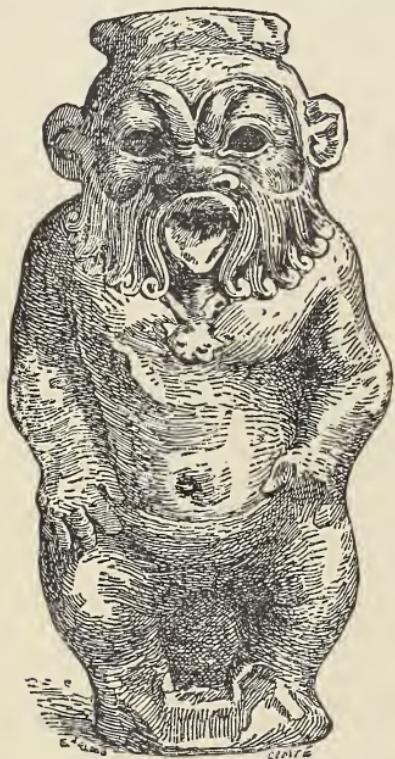
it takes to have the pavement in our streets covered with mud. If it were not often swept, we soon should not know that there was any pavement at all. We can easily understand how in the course of thousands of years, a great many feet of dust and sand might have settled over the ruins of ancient cities and temples.

In the earliest times people knew nothing about the true God. I suppose, like the savages who are

living now, they believed in a great many gods. They thought that some were good and some were bad. They supposed that the good gods sent them game, and fish, and pleasant weather, and that the bad gods sent thunder, and lightning, and sickness.

There are many people on the earth who believe this now. They pray to sticks and stones, and to all sorts of ugly images which they have made themselves, and call gods.

We call these people "heathen," and the lowest of them are probably very much like the first people who lived on the earth, who knew nothing about how they came



IDOL FOUND IN PHœNICIA.

here, or how they ought to live, or what would become of them after their bodies died.

Men are very different from animals. Horses and dogs do not wonder about who made them. But even the lowest kind of men begin to think about God, and in some way try to pray to Him. They feel that there is something greater than they ; something that sends great storms and winds, something that makes the grass grow, and the sun shine. They do not know what to call it, neither do they know that this Power is full of love. They only know enough to be afraid of it, and so in their blind, helpless way they try to pray to it.

As time went on, and men learned more about the earth and about themselves, they learned more about God also. By the time people had learned to write, they had found out many things about God.

The race who knew the most about Him were the Hebrews, or Jews, as we call them. These people belonged to one of the earliest races which we know any thing about.

There were other nations that were very ancient also. These were the people who lived in Egypt, and in China.

If you little folks live in the city perhaps you have seen some of the queer people from China, with their pigtails and white-soled shoes. They belong to a very old country indeed. Their great-grandfathers, away back, had learned a great deal while ours

were still wild people, wearing skins and living in caves.

The people in China and in Egypt knew many things that the old Hebrews did not know. They knew how to build great temples and tombs and pyramids, how to build boats, and to carry on business, and to get rich. But although they had some great and wise men, scarcely any of these people had an idea of the one, true God.

The Hebrews lived in a little country and were poor; they did not do so much business nor have so much power as the other nations, but they had what was much better.

There were born among them, from time to time, great prophets and wise men, who taught new truths,—the greatest truths that the world ever knew until Jesus came. The Hebrews were such an important people that, by and by, I am going to tell you a great deal about them.

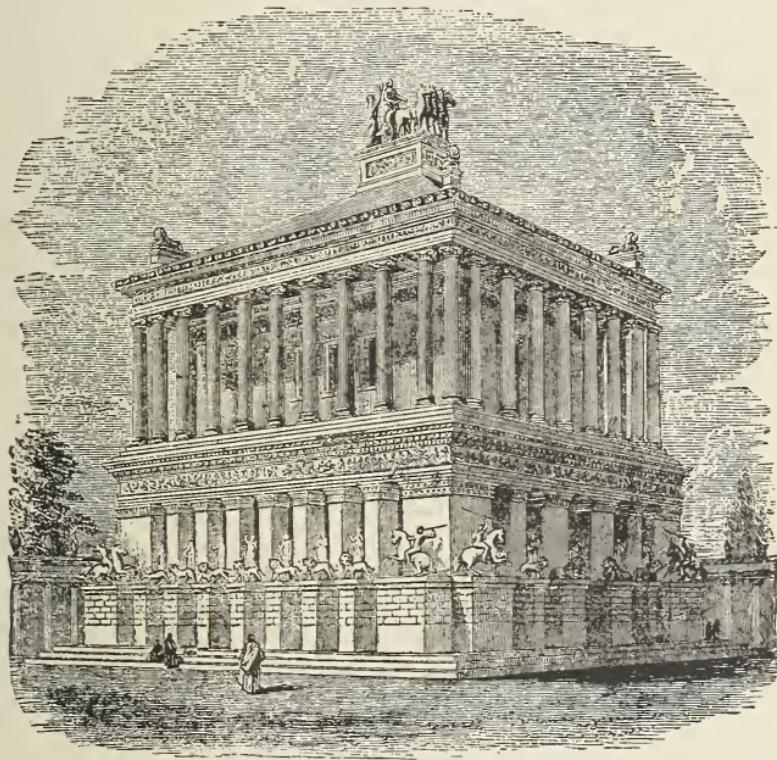
But before we stop to do that I want to tell you a little about what men have been doing since the time of Christ. In another place I shall have a good deal to say to you about Jesus, whom we call “The Christ, the Son of God.”

His coming into the world was so important, that we divide all history into two parts, that which happened before he came, and that which has happened since.

A new religion, called Christianity, began to be

preached, although, as time went on, a great many teachings that were called by that name had nothing to do with what Jesus taught.

The followers of Jesus taught both the Jews and the heathen the new Christian truths. Little by little these ideas began to take firm hold of the minds of men. In another chapter I will tell you



A FAMOUS TOMB IN ASIA MINOR BUILT ABOUT 300 YEARS BEFORE CHRIST.

how it all came about, and how at last the people in the Western World, that is, in Europe and America, all came to be called Christian nations.

You must know that by this time—that is, when Jesus lived—the world was very different from what it was when people were beginning to learn to write and when they carved figures on the rocks.

They now often wrote with pen and ink on parchment, which was made from the skins of animals.

The world had been lived in so long that there were no longer only miserable little huts and tents. There were, in many places, fine marble palaces, filled with beautiful statues, more beautiful than any you see nowadays. There were also great temples and monuments and good roads and bridges.

A few people were very rich and had a great many servants and slaves. These were generals, or rulers, or persons who had a large amount of land. Most of the people in the world were still poor, and could not read, and worked for the rich.

With the exception of the Jews and the Christians, who were a very small number at first, all the people in the world were heathen—that is, they did not know of the one good God in whom we believe.

There were a great many kinds of belief. Some people believed in many gods, and some in no god at all; some believed that they should live after their bodies died, others did not. Many persons prayed to the images of their gods in the temples.

Probably the first large, beautiful buildings that were ever built were temples. While the people themselves were willing to live in small, cheap

houses, they always wished to have a large, fine house in which to worship.

There are many heathen countries now ; in fact, even to-day, although it is nearly nineteen hundred years since Jesus was born, most of the world is still ignorant of the Father in Heaven whom he showed to us.

We have sent a few teachers out across the ocean to these people to try and help them to a better way of living and thinking. These are the missionaries of whom you have often heard, and they are doing the noblest kind of work in the world.





CHAPTER VII.

THE NEW WORLD.

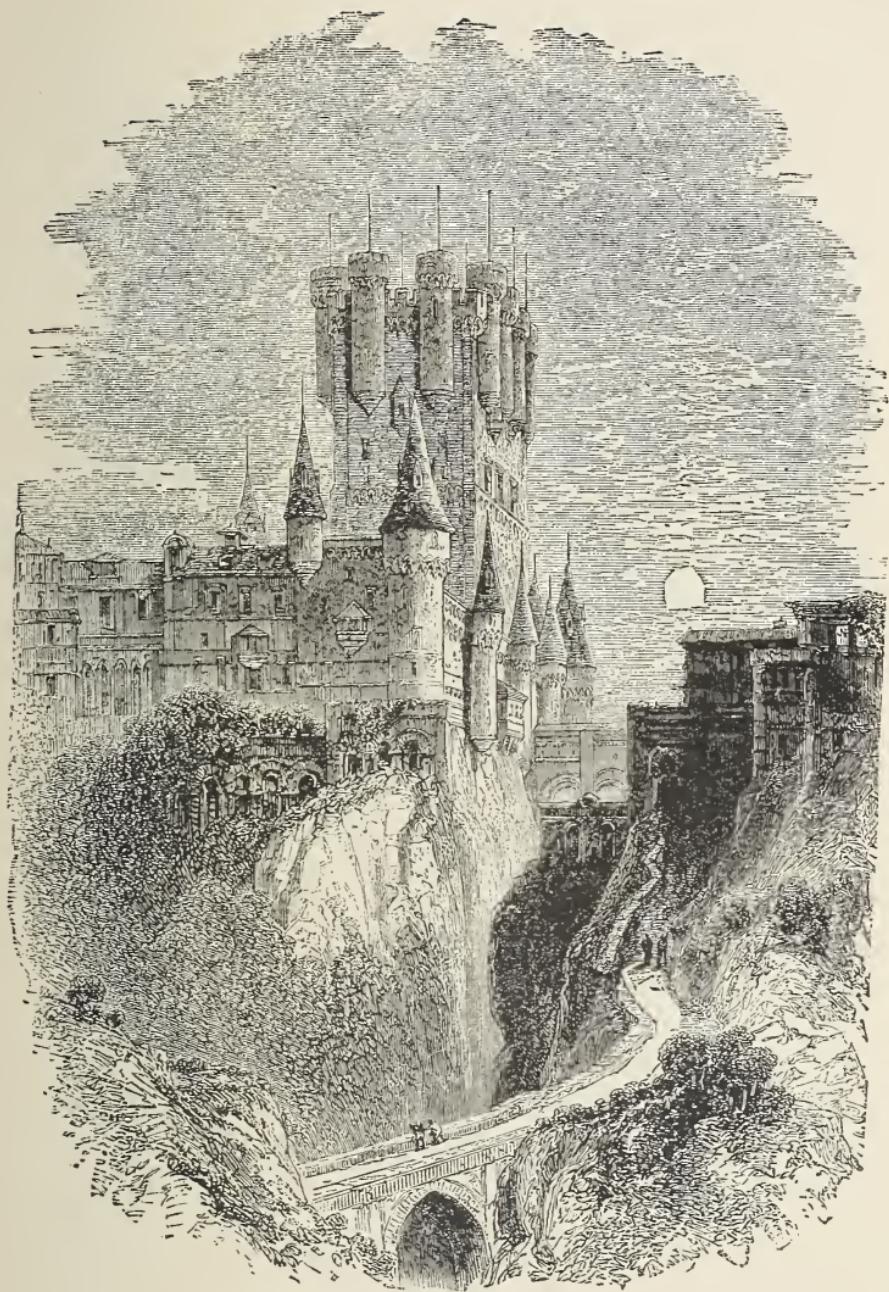
FROM the very earliest times, as men travelled from the east toward the setting sun, they found races of savages much more ignorant than themselves in the new countries to which they came.

They never found a land where people were not already living. These men had no record of their past, and could not tell how they came there, so I suppose we shall never know.

The men from the east conquered these people and then went to work to build up towns and cities, to cut down forests and build roads, so that, in the course of time, they had as fine buildings and as many comforts as the nations in the older lands of the east.

But even the rich, who lived in fine castles and ate off silver plates and had plenty of servants, had no such common comforts as even the poor have now.

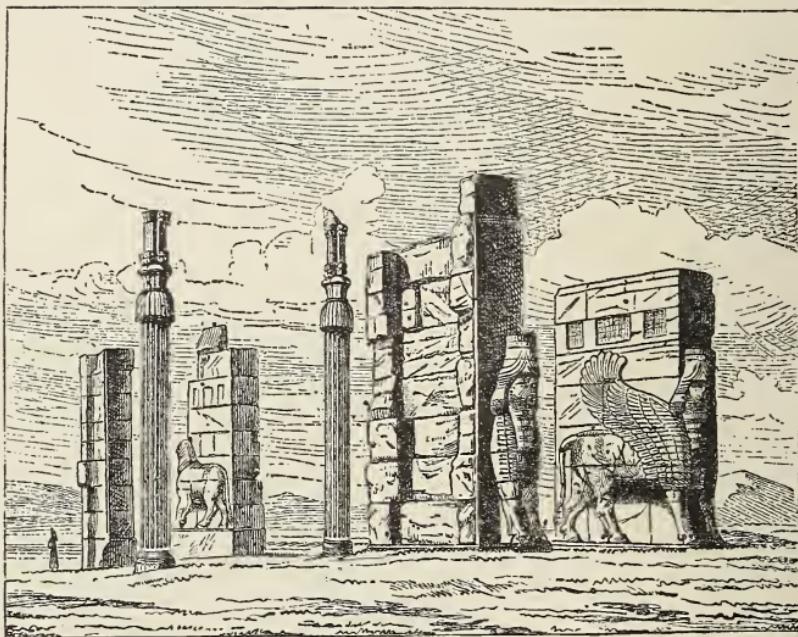
There were no stoves, and no one burned coal nor knew any thing about the great masses of coal that



A CASTLE IN WESTERN EUROPE.

lie buried in the earth. There were no such things as matches, or gas, or kerosene oil, or umbrellas, or rubber overshoes, or a thousand other things that we should not know how to do without.

While the new cities were rising in the west, in France, and Germany, and England, many ancient



RUINS IN THE EAST.

cities in the far east were falling to ruins, and were becoming buried under the shifting sands.

Few people besides soldiers and sailors and king's messengers ever travelled much, and many persons never went out of the little village or valley in which they had been born.

There were no steam cars or steamboats, and every one had to travel on land very slowly, either on foot or on the back of a mule, or in a clumsy cart over rough roads. Nowadays we think nothing of getting on board the cars and going to the White Mountains in summer and to Florida in winter. We can travel a thousand miles now as easily as once we could have gone fifty. Not until your grandpapa was born did this wonderful change in travelling come about.

The ability to go quickly from one place to another has made a great difference in every thing. When it was impossible to get large masses of food moved quickly, it was not so easy for people to live together in large cities. So in these old times of which I speak there were fewer large cities than we have now.

As there were no post-offices or newspapers or photographs of distant places, and as it was so hard to travel far, you can easily see how most people could know very little of the great world about them.

Ignorant persons generally dislike what they do not understand, and we find that in old times most men rather looked down upon those of other nations because they spoke another language and had different customs from their own.

In our own time, when we have plenty of books, papers, lectures, and pictures, we can get better ac-

quainted with the people on the other side of the world than we could have been with those in a neighboring town if we had lived three or four hundred years ago. Getting better acquainted with them makes us more interested in them, and this is one great reason why, in our time, there is a much kindlier feeling between different nations than their used to be. Though when we read of the different wars which are always going on somewhere in the world, we can see that we are very, very far yet from loving our neighbors as ourselves.

I want to tell you of two very wonderful things which greatly helped to set people to thinking, and made a marvellous change in the history of the whole world.

It had generally been supposed, you know, that the earth was flat ; but at last men came to the conclusion that it must be round, and about four hundred years ago—that is, about fifteen hundred years after the time of Christ, a brave man named Christopher Columbus, who believed this, and who was not afraid of coming to the end of the world and falling off, started out from the Old World to sail across the great Atlantic Ocean, feeling sure that he would find land on the other side. He sailed and sailed westward, over the unknown sea. On and on he went, days and weeks and months, and when all the sailors with him in his three little ships thought they were lost and should never see

land again, brave Columbus still hoped that he should come to land, and would not turn back.

At last, when the sailors were so angry that they were ready to throw him overboard, he saw an



LANDING OF COLUMBUS, 1492.

island near the land of the New World, or America, as we now call it. Only Indians lived there, who had never seen a white man before.

When people in Europe heard about this you may

be sure that they were greatly surprised. In the next two hundred years a great many other people came, but they did not bring their families, and did not mean to stay. They came because they thought they could find gold, and would get rich. Most of them were disappointed. But though they did not get much gold they found a great many other things, and learned a great deal, so that it made it easier for the other people who came after them, and brought their families and lived here.

By the time Columbus came to America books had begun to be printed. This invention of printing was one of the most important things that ever happened after people learned how to make fire.

Now, you see, whenever a man learned some new and important thing, he could print it in a book, and then every one would learn about it. This saved a great deal of time. Each man who could read, could learn what other people had seen, and heard, and thought of, so he would not have to spend his time in going to see, or hear, or think it out for himself.

If you stop to think a minute you will see how the power to print, made books a great deal cheaper. Now that they did not have to be written out slowly by hand, but could be printed quickly by a machine, even the poor people began to have books.

Many poor boys had just as good minds as rich boys had, but before this it was hardly possible for

them to learn much. Now, however, since they could have books, they studied the Bible and Latin books, and books of poetry, and they read stories about the new country across the sea.

The Knight of the Swanne.



AN EXAMPLE OF THE STYLE OF LETTERS AND PICTURES IN THE BOOKS WHICH WERE FIRST PRINTED IN ENGLAND.

There were no children's story-books in those days, and no *St. Nicholas* or *Youth's Companion* with beautiful pictures. Children had rather a hard time then, I am afraid. Not half as much was done

for them as is done now. There were no such toy-shops and candy-shops as we have; no school where the children learned drawing and music, and where the boys and girls studied together, and had smooth, polished desks, with bright pictures on the wall, and nice maps and blackboards and slates.

In those times people did not think it worth while to teach girls very much, so they often did not learn any thing but reading and writing. At home they learned many things that little girls now do not know much about; all kinds of sewing, and embroidery, and spinning, and weaving, and housework.

People had come to respect women more than they used to, but still they did not think that a woman ought to know as much as a man, and there were many unjust laws about women which I am glad to say, in most places, have nearly passed away.

Altogether, with the exception of the beautiful churches and pictures, there was very little in the world of Europe four hundred years ago, which we should be glad to have to-day. When you are older and read about the cruelty and ignorance of those old times, when people could neither read nor travel much, you will be very glad that you were not born until the nineteenth century, and that you were born in America.



CHAPTER VIII.

THE STORY OF OUR PEOPLE.

ABOUT two hundred and fifty years ago, a few brave men, who had been driven away from their home in England on account of their religion, decided that they would bring their families over the great Atlantic Ocean to America. They meant to make a home for themselves in this strange New World, where they could believe just what they thought was right, and would have no one to interfere with them. It was a very hard thing for them to do, and I am sure you will think so when I tell you what they did.

They set sail in summer in a little ship called the *Mayflower*, and did not land until winter. Once I went in a great steamship across the same ocean, and I saw land in about seven days. Even that seemed a long time to be out on the water, but just think what it must have been to those poor Pilgrims who were on the ocean over ninety days! When I was on the steamship I had good food and a good bed, and passed a very comfortable time. I

knew, besides, that when I got to the other side of the ocean I should see friends, and that made me happy. But these Pilgrims were leaving their dear friends and coming to a wild, strange country where savages lived, and I know their hearts must have ached when they thought of the dear ones they had left behind, and of the hard times that they knew awaited them in the New World.

They saw land at last, and after some time landed on a rock which I suppose is the most famous spot in our whole country.

They started a little town and called it "Plymouth," and the rock is called "Plymouth Rock." I hope some day you may all stand beside it as I have done, for it is a place which should be very dear to all American boys and girls.

Here on the hill, beside the sea, they built their first little log house. I will not stop now to tell you the long, sad story of that first cold, dreary winter; about the little baby, Peregrine, who was born; how half their number died, and yet how every one refused to go back in the *Mayflower* to their dear home and friends.

Ah! they were a brave, noble people! No other nation was ever begun as ours was. Other people have gone to new countries to get more land, to find gold, to become rich. But these people came that they might serve God. To be sure they were very strict and believed a good many things which we do

not believe now, but they were much wiser and better than the other people of their time. They were poor and unknown then. The kings and queens and great people of the earth cared very little about them. But to-day they are the ones of whom we are proud, and I think all the boys and girls who come to know about them will feel better pleased to be able to find the names of William Bradford, or John Carver, among their great-grandfathers, than the name of any king.

A great many different kinds of people have come over the sea from the Old World since then. Some have come because in a new country they could make more money than at home. Others have come because in this country there are no kings and queens, and every man can vote; for this is a country where the people themselves make the laws. Some have come for one reason, some for another, but there have never come any people half so important as those brave Pilgrims who came first. By their wise plans and their hard work they prepared the way for making this nation in which we live the happiest and best nation in the world.

A few years later, some other people who were very much like the first Pilgrims, came over to America and settled in Boston. One of the first things they did was to start a school for boys. This school is now the Boys' Latin School, and is the oldest school in America. Perhaps some of the boys

who read this will go to it some day. It is a great and famous school now.

Very likely you think there was nothing remarkable in starting a school and in having free schools where every boy could go. We see so many public schools everywhere that we do not often think what a wonderful thing it is to have schools, and we forget that people did not always have them.

Our country was the first in the world to give every boy a chance to go to school even when he could not pay for it.

I have already said that for thousands of years people did not think that women were of so much consequence as men; so, when the first school was started, they did not think of letting the little girls go to it. It was a long time before there were any free schools for girls, and it was not until the days when your mamma was a little girl that a young woman had just exactly as good a chance to study as a young man has.

It is now over two hundred and fifty years since the English people began coming to this country. During this time there have been more inventions than were made in all the thousands of years since men first used stone hatchets and wore skins for clothing.

One great reason for this was that the people had printed books, and that, in this country at least, almost every one learned to read.

In old times cloth was made by the spinning-wheels and looms which people had in their own houses. After machinery was invented to do this, great factories were built where the cloth was made. As it could be made by machinery much quicker than by the little hand-ooms, every one could afford to have more of it and to dress better.

I said, you remember, that when your grandpapa was a little boy, people could travel on the land no faster than they travelled thousands of years ago ; that is, they went on horseback during all those years. Now, since steam-engines were invented, and railroad tracks laid down, a man could easily travel two or three hundred miles a day.

Telegraphs were invented, too, and after a while people were able to send messages, not only on land, but also under the ocean clear over to Europe.

Telegraphs, railroads, and photographs have made a wonderful difference in the world. This morning, when your papa takes up his newspaper, he can learn of all the important things which have happened all over the world during yesterday and last night. This would have seemed like a miracle if it had happened in ancient times.

One great result of all this is, that people travel a thousand times as much as they used to. Those who do not travel learn a great deal about distant countries by means of photographs. So we get acquainted with all the different kinds of people on the earth.

We learn about those who live away up north, where they have a night that is six months long. And we learn about the black people who live in the hot countries where there are lions and elephants.

Those who live out on the prairies, and have never seen any mountains, learn about them by means of pictures, and the people who live among the mountains learn about the sea ; so each one has a chance to become acquainted with the whole world.

When we hear that a strange people, speaking a different language from ours, and away off on the other side of the world, are suffering from hunger, we feel sorry for them, and send them food and money if we can. Before steamships were built we could not have done this. It might have taken months for us to hear that the crops had failed, and that they had no food, and then several more months before we could have gathered the money or food and sent it to them.

I expect that in the time to come, when people of different countries have learned more about each other, they will care more for each other, and then there will not be so many wars.

You remember I told you that the first men used to quarrel and fight a great deal, the strong ones killing the weaker. Now we have learned that it is wrong for *us* to punish or hurt any one who injures us, for we have made laws to protect us, and the

State must punish a man who commits a crime. We have policemen to arrest bad men, and courts in which to try them, and prisons in which to put them.

Society, that is, all the men taken together, choose a few men among themselves to make the laws, and then we are all bound to obey them. In some places the women as well as the men help choose those who shall make the laws. I think very likely the little girls who read this will some day join with their brothers in choosing the men who shall make the laws here in our own State. Then I hope when all the people have a hand in making them, the laws will be better than they are now.

I hope also that the time will sometime come when people will learn the law of love which God has taught us. Then, when countries quarrel with each other, instead of fighting, and having cruel, wicked wars, they will try to settle their disputes in some other way. I am sure that this good time is coming, and each one of us can help a little in bringing it sooner, by being gentle, and patient, and trying to be "blessed peacemakers."

But sometimes, when I see the terrible and wicked things which men have done, even in this happy America, and in this age, I am afraid that the good time for which I hope will be long in coming.

Have you ever heard of that terrible thing called "slavery"? If you had lived when your papa was young you would have heard a great deal about it.

Slavery began in very early times, no one knows how long ago. Sometimes the slaves were black, sometimes they were as white as you are. Many times they were the wives and children of soldiers killed in battle. Men were very cruel in those old times, and when they went to fight in their enemies' country they not only killed the men, but killed the innocent women and children, or else took them away and made slaves of them.

Even after people had learned to be Christians, many of them thought it was not wrong to have slaves. In some parts of our country there were slaves almost from the first. These slaves were all black people, and sons inherited them from their fathers just like any other property. The house-servants and nurses, or "mammies," as they were called, were often very fond of their master's children, who in return often treated them very kindly and took good care of them when they grew old and helpless.

The best that could be said about slavery was that many of the slave-holders took great care of the slaves who had grown up on their estates, treating them often like members of one great family of which the master was the head, and letting them learn more than they would have known if they had remained in the savage tribes in Africa from which the first slaves were stolen.

But men owned slaves just as they did horses. Sometimes a slave was bought for a thousand dollars, or just about as much as one would pay for a fine horse;

and while some masters were kind to their slaves, others were cruel, and would sometimes whip them almost to death. No one was allowed to teach them how to read. They were kept, like animals, to do work; and their masters did not want them to know much.

The worst thing about it all was that even if a master were kind, he sometimes needed money, and would sell a slave to get it. Then the poor man would have to leave his wife and children, to go off with his new master, and perhaps never see them again.

I could tell you stories about these poor black people, and how cruelly they were treated, which would make you cry, for I hope you all have tender hearts, and would not like to see a dog suffer, and much less a poor, little, black child. Some day you must get your papa to tell you the story of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It is one of the best stories I ever read, and is about a slave who was sold away from his family.

You know I told you in the first part of this book how people kept travelling from the east, westward. Ever since the Pilgrims came across the Atlantic Ocean to America, people kept travelling westward. After a while this great country, called the United States, had railroads running all over it, and white people living in all parts of it. There always were a few Indians besides, but they lived on the prairies by themselves, and did not have much to do with the white people; but the black people increased in numbers greatly. Nearly all of them were slaves,

and lived down South, and worked on farms. The people at the South said they thought it was right to have slaves, but many at the North thought it was very wrong. After a while they began to quarrel about it, and at last, when the Southern people had made up their minds to break away from us and have a separate government of their own, the people at the North felt that it was all wrong and must be stopped.

Then there was a terrible war between the North and the South, which lasted four years. It was one of the most important wars that ever was fought. All this happened when your papa was a little boy or a young man, and you must ask him to tell you about it.

During the war our President, good Abraham Lincoln, set the slaves free ! At the end of the war we were once more a united nation, and, thank God ! a free people, where every man, except the few Indians, can vote ; that is, he can choose the men who are to make the laws and the men who are to see that they are carried out. I hope sometime we shall learn to treat these Indians better, and shall give to all of them schools, such as have already been given to a few tribes, so that they can learn to speak English, and to live in houses instead of tents, and to work and earn their living as we do. It is true we never made slaves of them, as we did of the black people, but we have treated them in a very mean, selfish way, and have never, as a nation, kept the promises we made to them.



CHAPTER IX.

THE PRESENT TIME.

WE live now in what I think is the very best country, and the very best time that there ever was in the whole world. Sometimes people talk about the “good old times”; but no one who knows about it believes that there ever was a time when the world was better, or wiser, or happier than it is now.

There are more persons now who can dress comfortably and live decently than ever before. And, what is of a great deal more importance, there never was a time when so many read, or studied, or travelled so much, or were so kind and helpful as they are now.

We have free hospitals for sick people and asylums for those who are deaf, or blind, or insane. Little, blind children are taught to read with their fingers, from raised letters, and deaf boys and girls are taught to speak with their lips.

I suppose you have all heard of Temperance societies, and the “Society for the Prevention of Cruelty

to Animals." I really do not know where to stop when I begin to think of all the kind things that are done all over the world for the poor and sick and helpless.

Of course there were many kind-hearted persons in old times, but as I said before, it was impossible for them to learn of all who needed their help before there were books and newspapers; and it was very difficult to send help before there were railroads and steamships. Then, when people were more ignorant, they were more cruel. Only one hundred years ago such cruel things were done as you could hardly believe now. People were put into prison for debt, and in some places were hanged for shooting a deer on their neighbor's land.

The doctors knew very little about healing the sick, and many persons, two hundred years ago, who were insane, or had fits, were thought to have evil spirits in them, or were supposed to be witches. Besides, people were used to seeing a great deal of suffering, and thought nothing of treating servants and prisoners, and even little children, in a very harsh way. Sometimes poor little children worked down underground in the deep, black coal mines, where they could hardly ever come up and see the blessed sunshine. They never went to school, and they lived a terrible life.

Less than a hundred years ago, most of the prisons were dreadful places. The prisoners were idle

and dirty, and often did not have enough to eat. Now, in most places, there is a great improvement. The prisoners are kept clean, and have good food, and are taught some useful trade. The laws are not so severe as they used to be, and good care is taken that no innocent person shall be punished, as often used to happen. In fact, the trouble is now that the guilty ones often go without the punishment which they deserve.

We must not think, because the time we live in is so much better than the old times, that we can feel at all contented and think there is nothing very important left for us to do to make the world better. There are a great many terrible things in the world still. There is a great deal of selfishness, and wickedness, and cruelty even in our own happy country. The really good Christian people, who care for others as much as for themselves, are very few indeed.

Many men are in such a hurry to get rich that they never stop to think what Jesus said about doing to others as we would have them do to us. They never stop to think that they are children of God, and that He has told us we can never be really happy except by being unselfish and thinking of others.

And while I am speaking of this dear land, America, in which we all live, I want to stop right here and preach a little bit of a sermon to the little boys and girls who, in a few years, are going to be

men and women and do the sober work of the world.

I want you to have all the fun and frolic you can, and I do not want to worry you with thoughts that will make you too sober. But I think if little folks never have any quiet, serious thoughts, they are apt to be rather foolish and selfish. And you know that people are very likely to become, when they are grown, just what they began to be as children.

We, who have had so much done for us to make us what we are, should begin to think how we, in our turn, can do something for other people.

As I have already said, we live in the most wonderful time in the history of the world. Every man now has to know and think of many things of which his father knew nothing. Every man's life now depends more on other people than it used to.

Over a hundred years ago, when George Washington was a boy, a man and his wife could raise their own food and make the cloth for their clothes themselves out of the wool from their own sheep. But almost no one does that now. People live in cities a great deal more than they used to, and so cannot raise their own food, and most of the cloth is made now by machinery in factories.

Each man learns to do one thing; perhaps he makes shoes or matches. He makes not only for himself, but for other people, and others do every thing for him. They write books, and paint pic-

tures, and build houses, and dig potatoes for him, and do a thousand other things. Each man has to depend for almost every thing he wants on other men.

Each man finds, if he does not work and plan to please other people, that he can earn no money, and so cannot buy the things which he cannot make himself. So the whole world is being bound closer together. We must know and think more about others all over the world than ever before; this is true even if we are selfish, and care only about making money.

It is much more true if we think of every one in all the world as belonging to one great family, and all brothers, children of "Our Father." This seems a very simple, common thing to say. But it is a great truth, and one of the very greatest thoughts that I can give you. It is a thought that goes down deeper than any thing you can think or fully understand even when you are grown up.

When we look beyond Christian lands, which really are, even now, only a small part of the world, we find other countries a great deal larger than ours and having a great many more people in them, where are all the cruelty, and wickedness, and ignorance now, which I have been telling you, used to be in our Christian countries in old times.

There are still many lands in the world now where women are treated like slaves and have no rights;

where the little girls are never taught any thing, and where many of the laws are cruel and wrong. There are other countries still where there are no laws, and where the people still live almost like the first men and women of whom I told you. They are almost naked, they live in little huts, and are dirty, ignorant people who hardly know the difference between right and wrong. All these need to be taught, and helped, and lifted up at least to where we are, and every one of us ought to help do a little towards this. We can help a great deal in ever so many ways. I wonder if you can find out what these ways are; if not, I will tell you by and by.





CHAPTER X.

A TIME-TABLE OF THE CENTURIES.

I HAVE told you about so many different things in these talks which we have had that I am afraid you will find it hard to remember them. Suppose you try to think of your mind as a closet that has a great many hooks in it on which you can hang things.

The things I have been telling you in a few, simple words about our country, and the history of people on this earth, and about the way the earth was made, are the hooks. I hope you will screw these hooks in hard so that they will not come out. Now you will always be learning a great many more new facts about the earth and the people on it, and as you learn each new thing you must hang it on the hook where it belongs, and then you will always know just where to go and find it.

Let us look back a minute now over what we were talking about. We began by telling how God created every thing, and always was creating, and always will create. We told about how slowly He

worked in making the worlds, how our earth was one of the smallest things made, and how it took millions of years to form it into its present shape. We saw how it took countless years for it to become ready for people to live on. We learned about the first people who ever lived, how they wore skins of animals for clothing, and had no tools nor machines. We have seen how, little by little, very slowly, they made themselves more comfortable and unlike animals, who are always satisfied with being animals and never wish to improve. These people went on, never satisfied, and always learning more and more.

I think if we wanted to tell the greatest difference between animals and men, it would not be by saying that animals have four legs and a tail, and men have two legs and no tail. It would not be by showing the difference between their bodies. I should say perhaps the greatest difference between men and animals was shown by men having language, and animals having none.

To be sure dogs bark, and cats mew, and other animals make noises, but this is not language at all ; they do not all agree in making a particular kind of noise stand for a particular thing, as men do when they use a word. Language is one of the most wonderful things in the world, whether it is a deaf-and-dumb language of signs, a written, or a spoken language. Another thing which shows the immense

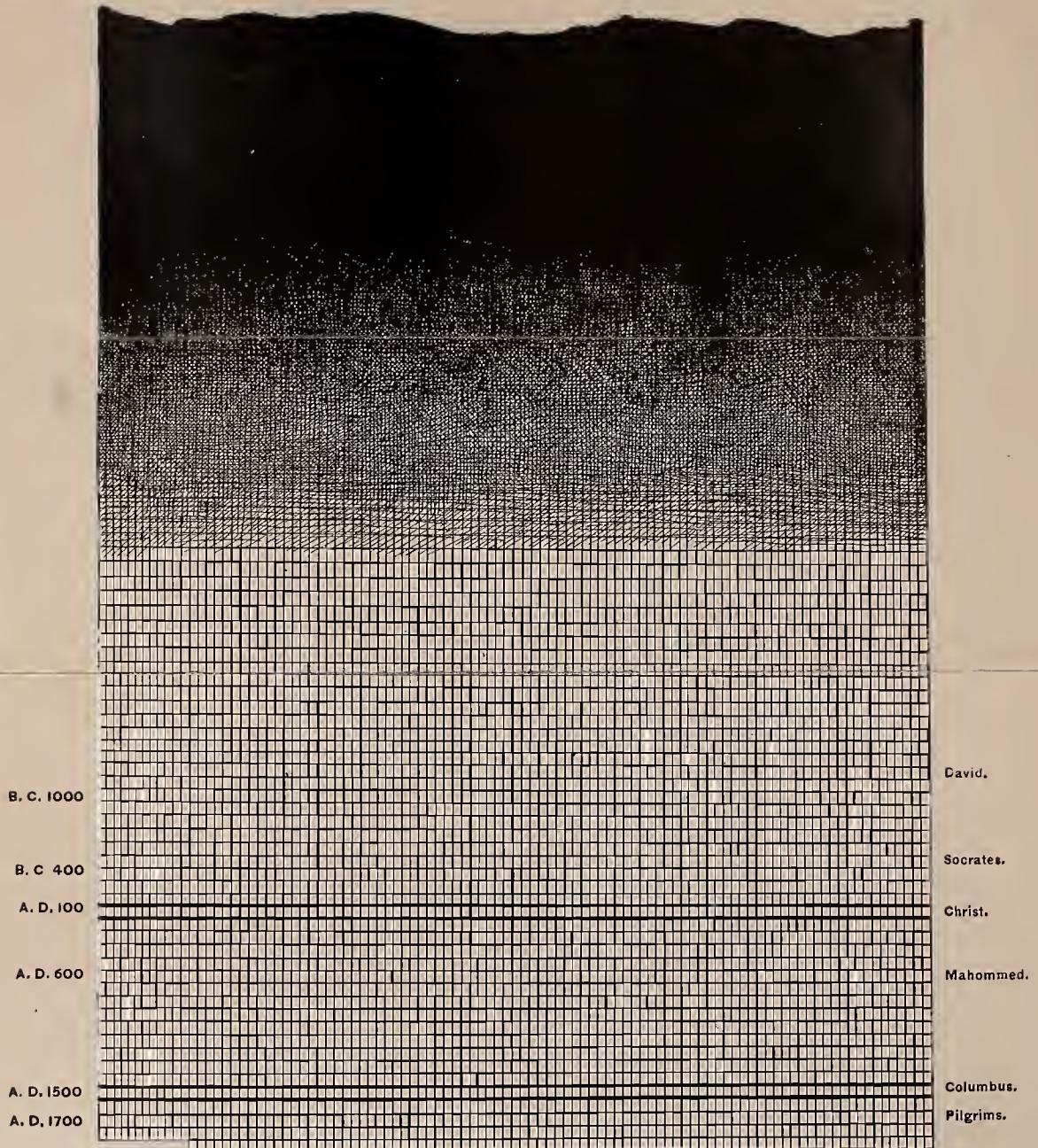


CHART OF THE AGES.

(1888.—Railroads, telegraph, stoves, gas, matches, sewing-machines, steamboats, photographs, telephones, ether, steel pens, spring-beds, india-rubbers, reaping and mowing and threshing machines.

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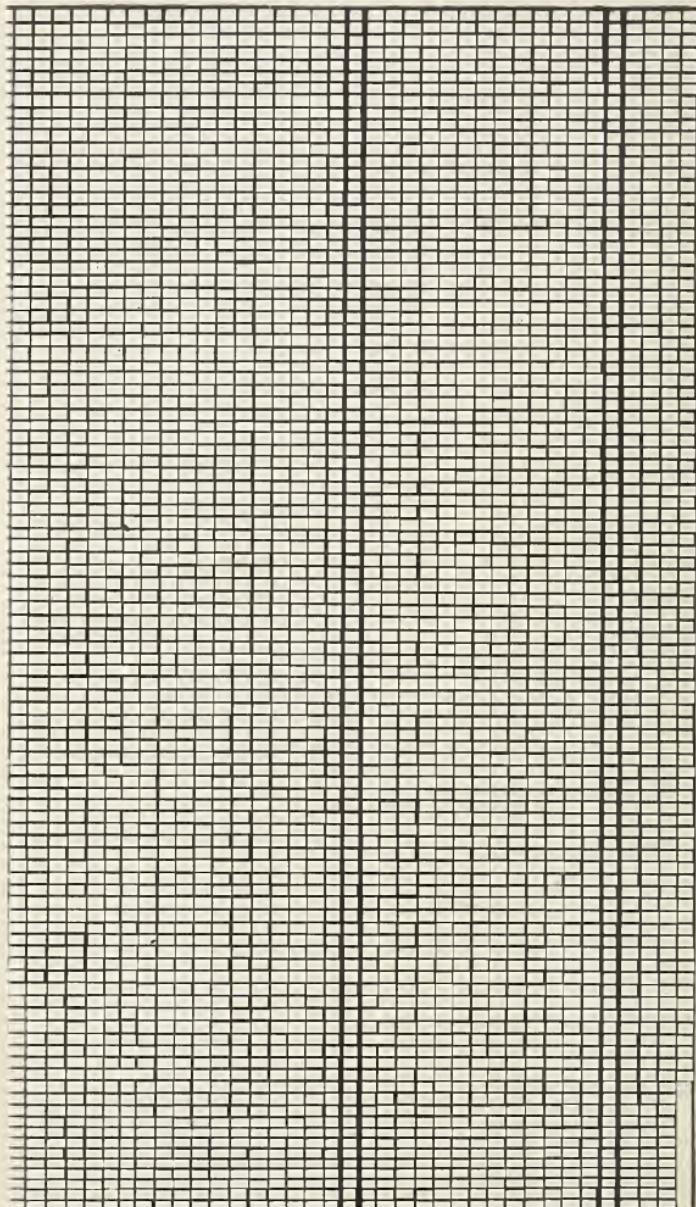


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difference between men and animals is that men are never satisfied. They always want to learn more, to travel and enjoy more, to get more money, and to have more power. But animals never look far ahead or plan as men do, and never want to improve.

Now I am going to try on another page to give you a little idea of the length of time since people began to make a record of what they did.

The upper half of the page, which is dark and blurred, represents the last part of those countless years which came before the time when men began to make records on stone or on clay tablets. The lower half represents the years that have passed since then. It is divided into rows, having one hundred divisions in each row. Each division stands for a year, and each row for a century.

The bottom row has only eighty-eight divisions, as there have been only eighty-eight years in this century.

Two heavy black lines mark the century in which Christ was born. It is called the first century of the Christian era.

The lower black lines mark the hundred years in which printing was invented, Columbus discovered America, and the great reformer, Luther, lived, of whom I will tell you by and by.

At the bottom row I have written a few of the many things which have been invented, or discovered, or come into use in this century.

If you are nine years old, try and think back more than two hundred times as long as you have lived, and that will take you back to the time of Christ. I know it is very hard for you little folks to understand how long one hundred years is, and of course it is a great deal harder for you to think how long one thousand years is, though perhaps you know how to write it on your slates. So I will tell you another way which will help you to imagine how long a time has passed since people began to learn to write.

We do not know exactly when it was, but I suppose it was about forty-five hundred years ago, or, as we generally say, four thousand five hundred years. Now if you should count all the stars in the sky,—the bright ones, and the far-away ones that look so faint we can hardly see them, you would find that there were not so many stars as there are years since that early time when men first made the wonderful discovery that they could write down their thoughts.





CHAPTER XI.

WHAT IS GOD?

NOW we are going to begin to think about the greatest thought in the whole world.

We have thought a little about the earth and the stars, and about plants and animals and human beings. It is very easy to think about these, for we can see them.

But now we are going to think about One whom we can neither see, nor hear, nor touch, and that is the hardest thing that any one can do.

When we speak about Him and say "He" instead of saying "She" or "It," we must not think it is because God is a man, or is like a man. It would be just as true to call God our "Mother in heaven" as our "Father in heaven."

In old times people used to think God was much the same as a large, strong man. Even when they had learned better than that, whenever they wanted to paint Him in a picture, they painted Him like an old man with a white beard, for they did not know any other way to express their idea of Him.

Many ignorant persons still think of Him as a great man living somewhere up in the sky, and looking down upon us with eyes very much like our own.

It is quite natural that people should have thought this in the old times when they knew very little, and supposed the world was flat, and thought that the stars were tiny little lights hung up in the sky to give us light on a dark night.

No one has ever seen God with his real eyes, because God has no body as a man has. In a certain sense we might say His body is the whole universe. He lives in every thing, in the stars and sun and moon, in you and me, in every flower that grows, in the mountains and the sea. God is everywhere all the time. Men must travel about from one place to another; they can be in only one place at a time. God never moves. He is already in every place.

When I say God lives in the trees and mountains and every thing that is, I think you can understand how it is that when we speak of God "seeing" and "hearing," it is in a very different way from what we hear and see. We see with eyes and hear with ears. God has no eyes nor ears, for he has no body, yet He can see and hear every thing, and is a real Person. The day and night are both alike to Him.

We often find the different writers of the Bible saying "God spake and said," and sometimes they speak of His "voice." They tell of His "riding

on the clouds," and call the earth His "footstool." They write about His "laughing," and of His "holding the earth in the hollow of His hand."

Now children do not understand this curious way of talking in poetry or pictures, and they often make the mistake of taking it all as if it were exactly so. In another chapter I will explain to you what I mean by calling this "poetry." When we find any writer saying that God has spoken to him, we must always understand that this voice was a very different kind from a man's voice. In fact it was not a spoken voice at all. It was simply that God put certain thoughts into the mind of the writer. When we read about His holding the earth in the hollow of His hand," we must remember that God has no real hand, and that this was just a grand, strong way of showing people how great and wonderful He is, and telling of His constant support.

Let us see now how many things we know about this wonderful Spirit who made us and the rest of the world, and who lives in us all, and makes the world the body in which His spirit dwells just as our spirit dwells in our body.

First of all, He has power to do every thing that He wishes to. We know, too, that although He has no eyes, nor ears like ours, He sees and hears and knows every thing. You see it must be so, for He is in every thing, and is the power in every thing.

Nothing could live a minute, even the mountains,

and sun, and stars would at once go out, just as the flame of a candle goes out when you blow on it, if God was not in them and did not all the time keep them in their places.

Besides this we know He is always the same. He never changes His mind nor forgets as we do. He sees into the future and knows what will happen, so it is just as real to Him as the present time.

He cannot do any thing wrong. He is full of love. He understands all about us, and knows us better than we know ourselves. If other people make mistakes about us and misunderstand us, He never does.

Sometimes grown people forget how they used to feel when they were little folks, and so they do not understand children. But the dear Father is our best friend. He always understands us, and the only thing He asks of us is to love Him and to grow like Him.





CHAPTER XII.

WHAT ARE WE?

I SAID the hardest thing in the world to do was to think of God, whom we cannot see, nor hear, nor touch. Perhaps the next hardest thing to do is to get a true idea of ourselves and each other. We are made in God's image. That is, our spirits are, in a small way, like His spirit. So really, when you come to think of it, you will see that we do not see nor touch each other; we only touch each other's bodies, for spirit cannot be seen.

The bodies in which our spirits live are not our real selves, but we are the power that is in them and makes them move. Your hand is no more really a part of *you* than a mountain is a part of God.

We say that God is in the mountain and all other things, just as we say that we are in our bodies.

Of course in our common, every-day way of speaking we do not say this; we speak of seeing a little girl when we see her feet skipping along the sidewalk and her arms are thrown around our neck and she talks to us, and it is well enough to say so, only we

must be sure to remember that the real little girl is something which lies behind the eyes and lips.

She would be just as truly my little friend if her hands and feet were cut off and the bright eyes grew blind and she could not see me.

The lower animals, like dogs and horses, are not made in the image of God as we are. They cannot grow like Him for they know nothing about Him. We do not see any reason to believe that horses, and birds, and fish, and other such creatures have of themselves learned any more now than they knew thousands of years ago. Sometimes we can teach a pet animal a few tricks by petting or whipping him, but that is all. On the other hand, men and women are much wiser now than they used to be. We have, as I have said, that wonderful thing called language, and each one who learns something can tell it to some one else, and in that way all can learn what each one knows.

Perhaps you never thought before that language was such a wonderful thing, but just see. Suppose George knows how to play checkers, and Edith knows how to make caramels, and Ida knows how to make paper dolls. Then each by talking and explaining teaches the others the one thing he or she knows. So each knows three things instead of one.

It is a wonderful thing to think of, that no matter how many thoughts we give to others we have just as many as we had before. If Amy has two dolls

and gives Ida one, of course she has only one left. But if Amy knows two things and teaches Ida one of them, although Ida has gained something, Amy has lost nothing, and each knows it better for having taught it.

In regard to our bodies and to the things which we see, eat, smell, hear, or wear, we are very much like the lower animals. But in regard to the things that belong to our spirits, we are not like them, we are like God, for we are creatures who have reason and the power to make ourselves what we want to be.

When we are cold and hungry we suffer in our bodies just as horses and dogs do, and when our bodies die and we leave them, they will decay in the ground and turn to dust, and after a while nothing will be left of them, but as we are spirits, made like God, who can never die, so we too can never die.

If we know of some dear little friend who has died, and we have seen the little body put into the ground, we must remember always that it is only the body which is there,—only the little home where our friend lived for a few years, and now, like a worn-out dress, it is laid aside.





CHAPTER XIII.

HEAVEN AND HELL.

PERHAPS there are no two words having to do with the great, unseen world which lies beyond the reach of our senses, that have been so misunderstood as the two words at the head of this chapter.

Ever since we can remember we have heard about heaven. If we had lived some years ago we should have heard a great deal about hell also, but nowadays we hear very little about it, partly because many people do not believe in it, but chiefly because those who do believe in it like to try and forget whatever they do not want to believe.

We have heard many Sunday-school songs about "Beautiful gates of pearly white," and we have sung about angels playing on golden harps and walking beside crystal fountains. These pretty songs have no doubt helped to fix in our minds the idea that heaven is a large, beautiful city, or at least some kind of a real place, high above the earth among the stars, where all good people go after they die. Perhaps we have seen pictures of beautiful, tall angels,

with long, white wings, and we think that some day, if we are only good enough, we shall look like them, and be able to fly about as the birds do.

This is what I used to think when I was a little girl, and just what you would naturally think from seeing pictures and hearing songs about heaven.

It is a very pretty, pleasant thought, and the only trouble with it is, that there is not the least reason for supposing it is true.

I do not mean that the poets and painters have tried to deceive us ; they simply tried, as best they could, to give us an idea that heaven means something very glorious and beautiful.

Now the dearest and best things, those which are the most real and lasting, are not things which can be painted or seen with our eyes.

If heaven were simply a very beautiful *place*, that in itself could not make us happy. The true heaven is the highest kind of joy, and it must be in ourselves ; the place where we are has very little to do with it.

Heaven is not far away among the stars ; it is not a place at all.

There can be heaven in our hearts before we die, just as well as afterwards.

Supposing you should play with matches when you had been told never to light them, and should set the house on fire, and all your pretty home should soon become a mass of black ruins, owing to

your doing wrong. Suppose in the fright and hurry your papa should have fallen and been hurt and your mamma made ill.

If you were taken into the house of the richest man in town, and given all the candy and toys you wanted, and allowed to do just as you pleased, do you think this would make you happy? I do not believe the finest things in the world could keep you from crying.

Suppose, on the other hand, you were walking by a railroad track and you saw that a large stone had fallen right in the way of the train which was coming around a curve in a few minutes. There was no time to call for help, and you began yourself to pull and push with all your strength, and just at the last minute, as the train thundered along, you rolled it off and fell with bleeding hands and aching body. Do you think that all the fun you ever had on the Fourth of July or Christmas, all the nicest things in the world that you could think of, would ever give you the real happiness that you would have as you lay there and thought, "There were hundreds of people on that train, and *I* saved their lives?"

Real happiness or misery, you see, has very little to do with what is outside of us.

There are very few poems or pictures nowadays that tell us about hell. From some sentences in the Bible that were not well understood, for many hundreds of years it was thought that hell was a place

where wicked people go when they die, and where, during all the years to come, they were to be burned in dreadful fires and have no chance to be good and love God even if they wanted to.

Many people have come to disbelieve in this kind of hell, although they still believe in the old idea of heaven as a particular place somewhere, away off up in the sky. Heaven is not a place, neither is hell a place, but yet they are very real things, and heaven is just as beautiful as can possibly be imagined, and hell is as terrible as it would be if it were a furnace of scorching flames.

Hell is the feeling which people have in their hearts when they are entirely selfish and hate what is good.

God can never put heaven into any one of us, nor keep hell out of any one of us, unless we choose to let Him. God can do almost every thing, but there is one thing He cannot do: He cannot make us good unless we choose to be, and He cannot make us happy unless we love what is good.

On the other hand, if a man went on millions of years doing wrong, and then should finally come to see that, after all, he was only cheating himself and had no real happiness, and had made a complete failure of himself, and should be really sorry and try to begin a new life, God would love him and help him, for it is never too late for Him to forgive any one if he is beginning to love Him.

This is a great If, however ; for when a child has begun by being selfish and untruthful, and grown up to be a mean, dishonest man, no one can tell whether when he leaves his body, or dies, as we say, he will change his mind and want to become any thing different from what he has always been.

Have you ever heard of the little blind fishes who live in the rivers of dark caves ? Once they had eyes as good as those of other fishes ; but after living a long time where there was no light, they became so blind they could not see when at last they swam out into the sunlight.

I do not know, but it may be that any one who has gone on many years thinking only of what he himself wants, and caring nothing about other people, nor loving what is true and noble, may some time get so blind that he really cannot see the beauty and loveliness of the best things, but may always go on shrinking smaller and smaller in his soul, until he is almost like an animal. This is what we mean when we talk of “ hell.”

When you read that heaven and hell are not places, you must not imagine that we shall not live in some place, but shall float around in the sky as the clouds do. No, indeed. We shall be in some place, of course, but the *place* will have little to do with our being in heaven or in hell. We know very little about what we shall do after we die, and we need not waste any time in guessing and wondering about how we shall look or where we shall be.

The only important question is as to what we shall be and what we shall do. Of one thing I am certain: if we love God, we shall not be idle and useless, but shall have a great many delightful things to do and learn.

Whether all the good people will be together, and all the bad ones together, I do not know, but I hope not. I cannot help thinking that perhaps those who have come to have heaven in their hearts will be allowed to teach and help those who have not yet learned to love our Heavenly Father.

I think, if we have not yet found it out, we shall come to see by and by that the most blessed thing which the dear God could let us do, would be to try to lead more people to love Him.

Although these are great thoughts, on which the wisest men have thought deeply, I believe Little Thinkers can begin to get a true idea of them.

If you come to really know the meaning of the words of which I have been telling you, it will make a difference in your whole life. If you do, you will never make the mistake of supposing, as many people do, that God wants to hire us to be good by promising us all sorts of splendid things and good times after we die, if we will only do all manner of disagreeable duties now.

You do not love your mamma because she has promised a prize or a treat if you will do so. She is your best friend, and you love her just because that

is the most natural thing to do, and when she comes home with a kiss and hug for you, that is worth far more than if she had not come but had sent some money.

In just the same way, when God's love comes to His children, that is the best thing He can give them, and any other kind of reward would seem very poor.

So when we see that heaven is not something to be given us, but is what we must choose to have come into ourselves, I think we shall not wait for it, but shall do our best to have it begin to come now.

We must never forget that we are just as immortal now as we are ever going to be.





CHAPTER XIV.

WHAT IS THE DEVIL?

WE sometimes hear people speak about Satan, and the "Devil and his angels." If we had lived a long time ago we should have heard a great deal more about them than we do now.

In old times many persons believed in witches, and fairies, and ghosts. We have learned better than that now, and know very well that there are no such things, though it is very easy to understand how people once believed in them. Many persons now who do not believe in witches, or fairies, or ghosts, do believe in devils, whom they think are servants of a bad angel named Satan, who have power over us, and can tempt us to do wrong. People used to think that Satan was the greatest of all the devils, and was almost as able to control us as God is. It used to be thought that he and God were always fighting with each other to win men's souls, either for hell or heaven. That was when heaven and hell were supposed to be particular places.

We have learned better than that now, and as

these words have come to have a new meaning, so the word “devil” has come to have a different meaning.

We no longer believe that devils are the ugly-looking creatures that we see painted in old pictures, where they were sometimes made to look as if they had horns, and hoofs, and breathed fire out of their nostrils and mouths. We know that this belief is just as foolish as if we believed in real witches who fly up to the moon on a broomstick.

Many good people, however, who do not believe in such devils at all, still think that there are evil spirits who are completely bad, and could not be good if they would, whom God allows to tempt us. I think this is a mistake, and that if we think of the devil as not being a real spirit at all, but only the sin in our own hearts, we shall be much nearer the truth. The devil is not a real creature, different from us, but sin and temptation are very real indeed, and we may well be terribly afraid of them. They are worse than an army of the devils like those in which men used to believe.

Many heathen believe in devils or bad gods. They are afraid of them, and give them presents to try to please them and prevent their doing harm. They think their good gods send the good things which they see, and the devil sends the whirlwinds, and sickness, and other dreadful things. It is very natural that they should have thought so, for they cannot understand what they see around them.

We know better. We know that God sends all things, and does only what is right and best, and nothing in the world is bad except our sin. We cannot explain all the sad things which He lets happen to us, but I think He will let us know the reason of them sometime, and until then we can wait and trust Him.

Many of the good men who wrote the books in the Bible believed in the old idea of the devil, which is not strange, for every one did at that time. This does not make what they said any less true and helpful to us.

When we read in the Bible this verse, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you," it means that we must fight against the naughty wishes and the bad thoughts which are in our minds.

If a girl whispers at school when the teacher's back is turned, and then sits still when she tells all those who whispered to stand, she is tempted to do wrong by the devil, or the wrong in her own self.

If she said to herself, "I won't whisper, even though the teacher is not looking, because it is against the rule," that would have been "resisting the devil," and the next time it would have been easier to do right.

If we do wrong it is always our own fault, for we know better and have the power to do right if we try; it is wrong for us to lay the blame on any one, or think that some devil outside ourselves has made us bad.

Perhaps you have heard Bible stories about Jesus “casting out devils.” In old times people understood very little about illness, and there were no wise doctors, as there are now, who understood how to make sick people well.

When men had fits and fell down and frothed at the mouth, or when they were insane and did strange things and talked wildly, most people believed that these poor creatures had devils in them who made them act so.

When Jesus cured those who were insane or had fits, it was simply restoring them to their right minds. The change was so great that it seemed as if a wicked spirit had given place to a good spirit, and so it was said that he “cast out devils.”

We may be very sure that even if there were such devils in the world as men used to believe in, they could never have any power over us unless we chose to let them. No one does wrong unless it is his own fault.





CHAPTER XV.

SIN.

WE are so made that, unlike animals, we can choose to do right or wrong, and, as I said before, no one could ever compel us to do wrong if we did not want to, and even God could not force us to be good, if we did not choose to be so.

God hates sin, and yet he loves us so much that he would forgive the meanest, most hateful man in the world, the minute he was sorry. Sometimes fathers never forgive their sons who have done wrong, but God's love is as much greater than ours, as the ocean is greater than a drop of water, and nothing can ever keep his love from us, if we really want it. But although he forgives, he can never change any wrong that has been done.

It always has to stay as a terrible fact, which all the tears in the world can never wash out. That is the dreadful thing about sin, it can never, never be just the same as if it had not been. Although it may be forgiven we must still remember it and be ashamed of it.

A bad man is the most foolish kind of a man in the world, for to do wrong is to fight against one's self.

Suppose a boy wanted to play a game of marbles, and said: "I am not going to take the trouble to find a flat place as the other boys do, I am going to play right here on this side of a hill where I am." Pretty soon this foolish boy would find all his marbles rolling away from him and would see that if he wanted to have a good time, he could not do just as he pleased; he must act *with* the laws of this world, and not against them, for it is a law of Nature which makes marbles roll down hill.

Suppose he said: "I want to fly my kite and I am going to fly it just where I want to, I don't care what the other boys do." So he goes into the woods where his kite is caught among the branches of the trees and he finds he cannot fly it. If he wants to fly his kite he must obey the laws of Nature and go where the wind is.

Suppose he wants to coast, but says: "I don't want to drag my sled up hill, and I won't; I am going down hill all the time."

How you would laugh at any boy who should talk in this way. You would say he must be a baby, not to know that if he wants to coast down hill he must first get to the top of it.

Suppose this boy wanted to skate and said: "I hate cold weather, I am not going to skate until next summer."

You can easily see that a boy who acted like this, although he might have his own way, would never have a good time, for he would be always fighting against the laws of this world.

If we wish to be happy we must always work *with* the laws of this world, and never *against* them, as I said before.

All this you will easily see. Now can you not see just as plainly, that any one who is selfish, or mean, or saucy to his mother—that is, any one who sets up his own way against God's way, is fighting against the laws of this world just as much as the boy who was determined to fly his kite among the trees?

Any child who tries to have a good time and thinks only of what he wants, no matter whether it is right or not, is working against fixed laws and can never be really happy.

God has so made us that the selfish man is sure to fight against the very thing that he wants; it is only by thinking of others as well as ourselves that we can ever get what we want.

If you can once come to understand all this that I have been saying, you will have learned the most important thing in the world for you to know, and you will be much wiser than many grown people who have never learned it.

When selfish people and those who do not love God die, we feel sure that wherever they may be

or whatever they may do in all the time to come, they can never be happy unless they completely change; we know that if a boy begins to be selfish and does not get over it before he is a man, he will be very likely to be selfish all his life, and if he has lived a long life of selfishness, it will be very hard indeed for him to ever change.

Just think how terrible it would be for any man to live on, and on, thousands of years, always fighting against the best part of himself, and hating God and the whole world.

This would be as dreadful as being burned in the "lake of fire," of which we read in the Bible.

When one thinks how terrible sin is, I do not wonder that the good men who wrote in the Bible about what happens to the wicked in the next life, should have used such words, for they did not know of any other way in which to tell how dreadful it is.





CHAPTER XVI.

WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

THE Bible is not one book. It is a great number of small books and letters bound together.

There are sixty-six in all. Some of these are very short, and could be read in a few minutes.

These books were written at different times, in different places, by a great many different men.

Some of them were kings, some were preachers, and others were shepherds and fishermen. Some of the writers we know nothing about.

The word Bible means “The Book.” The first part of it, which is the larger part, is called the Old Testament. It was written in the ancient Hebrew language, which is not spoken now. Those who

אָבִינוּ אָשֶׁר בָּשָׂמִים . יְקָדֵשׁ שָׁמָךְ : תְּבָא מַלְכֹתְךָ יְהִי רָצְוֶךָ
פָּאֵשֶׁר בָּשָׂמִים פָּנִים בָּאָרֶץ : לְחַם חַקְנָנוּ תָּן לְנוּ הַיּוֹם : וּסְלָחָ
לְנוּ אֶת-חַלְתֵּינוּ . פָּאֵשֶׁר אָנָּחָנוּ סְלָחִים לְבָעֵל חֹבֵינוּ : וְאֶל
חַבְיאָנוּ לְמַפְתָּח . פִּי אִם הַצִּילָנוּ מִן הַרְעָע . פִּי לְךָ הַטְמָלָכה
וְהַגְבּוֹרָה וְהַתְּפִאָרָה לְעוֹלָמִים . אָמֵן :

HEBREW.

spoke it then were called Hebrews or Jews. There

are a great many Jews among us now who speak English as we do, but many of them can read the Hebrew.

We do not know when the oldest part of the Bible was written. It was probably more than three thousand years ago. It was nearly eighteen hundred years ago that the latest part of the New Testament was written, so you see the books of the Bible were many hundreds of years in the making before they were ever put together in one volume.

The books of the New Testament did not begin to be written until after Jesus had died. He never wrote any thing himself, but his friends wrote books about him and told what he said and did.

The books of the New Testament were written almost entirely in the Greek language. These are

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 ΑΝΙΒΑΡΠΟΡΛΟΣΟΣΟΒΧΕΠΟΤΑΣΙΜΤΟΑΙΓΥΠΤΙΟΣΔΡΑΜΑΣΙΣ
 ΕΓΡΑΦΕΔΑΜΕΑΡΤΟΝΑΜΟΙΒΙΤΟΚΑΙΓΕΛΕΦΟΣΟΝΔΑΜΟ

GREEK.

more important for us to read than those of the Old Testament, because they give us the truest ideas of God.

When they were written people had come to know more about God, and had higher and purer ideas than those men of whom we read in the oldest books in the Bible.

No book in the world has ever had half so many readers as the Bible has. Thousands and tens of thousands of books have been written about it, to explain it and to tell what was thought about it. It has been translated into almost every language in the world.

This wonderful book, which we sometimes call "The Good Book," has been the comfort and help of millions of the wisest and best people who ever lived.

Many persons have allowed themselves to be killed rather than give up reading their Bibles. I remember, in reading of one of those cruel wars about religion, of which I shall tell you in another place, how a woman was afraid that her Bible would be taken from her; so she studied hard and learned by heart one of the letters in the New Testament, so that if it were taken from her she could still hold some of the precious words in her mind.

Another woman put her Bible into her dough and baked it in a loaf of bread, so when the soldiers entered her house to look for it they could not find it.

Now let us see why this book is so much loved. First of all, because it tells us about the things which every one who thinks, wishes more than any thing else to know.

It tells us who we are, and what we are here in this world for, and that we are going to live forever. It tells us that we are not alone in this great world,

but that we have a Father. It tells us how to make our lives rich and sweet, how to be beautiful souls, how to make heaven upon this earth.

Perhaps all this seems tiresome to you little folks. Dear papa, whom you have seen, is dearer to you than the Father in heaven whom you do not know very well yet. But by and by I think the time will come when the hunger in your life for some one higher, better, stronger, than any thing you have known, will come to you, and only God Himself can satisfy that. And the book which tells about God will be the dearest to you.





CHAPTER XVII.

WHAT IS GOD'S WORD?

THE world has found the Bible so precious and full of God's truth that men have come to call it "*God's Word*." I think this needs a little explanation, for you may not quite understand it.

God, as you know, has no body like ours. He has no mouth with which to speak, and no hand with which to write; so "*God's Word*" could not be words that He either spoke aloud or wrote. God has made us all, and put part of His own spirit into each one of us; but all through the ages, to some men more than to others, there came the power to understand the thoughts of God and to see new truths about Him.

These men spoke out boldly, saying what they felt God meant them to tell, and they were said to be "*inspired*." Inspiration means a breathing in, and when a man was called "*inspired*," it meant that he had taken into his mind the thoughts of God, just as he breathed into his lungs the sweet, fresh air.

Not only those who wrote the great truths in the

Bible, but others, since then, have been in greater or less degree inspired to speak new truth.

Whoever sees God's truth more clearly than others, and speaks it out bravely, is His messenger of truth, that is, His prophet.

There is some of God's truth, that is to say, God's Word, which is not written in the Bible, because we have learned about it since the Bible was finished.

But the most important truths, the deepest ones, on which the others rest, are to be found in the New Testament.

The Bible, as I said, contains many different kinds of books. Some of these are long records of names and histories which will not interest you much until you are older and know something about the histories of other nations.

But there are many delightful stories which have charmed all little people since the time when the Hebrew fathers told them to their little boys and girls thousands of years ago. They are just as interesting as the stories about George Washington which your papa tells you.

We see in all these histories and stories how, little by little, God's Word, that is, His truth, came to men ; these histories are like the outer husk or shell which contains the sweet meat, or God's Word, within them.

So when we say the Bible is God's Word, we must always understand that the part which is His

Word is that which tells us about God and our duties to Him and to each other, and that the stories and histories and poems are helps in teaching us all these important truths.

You know how much better you remember any thing when there is a story to it. It is always more interesting to hear about people who have done good things, or who have been stupid or wicked and done foolish things, than it is to read rules about being good, and commands against doing wrong. Now the Bible is full of these accounts of wise and foolish, and kind and selfish people, who were very much like us in many ways; and so the stories of their successes or mistakes can be a great help to us.

To be sure, all the important truths of the Bible could have been told in much fewer words and made clearer and plainer; and sometimes when we get puzzled over the meaning of many things in it, we wish it had been different. But it is probably best for us that it is just as it is.

God did not intend to make every thing perfectly easy and simple to understand. He meant to have us use our minds, and do a great deal of thinking for ourselves, and to learn all that we can from the thoughts of others.

The men who have given us different parts of God's Word or truth did not all think alike, for they lived in different times and places; some were wiser than others, and because they lived later they knew

more than those who came before them. But they were alike in one thing. They believed in one God and wanted to serve Him.

It is very interesting and wonderful to see by what slow steps the thought of God grew in the minds of men, and how, little by little, after many mistakes and blunders, and holding many foolish notions, they came to know God, and to know something of what He thinks and does.

You will sometimes hear it said that the Bible is a revelation of God. A revelation is something that is revealed or shown. If you were making Christmas presents for some one, and should tell me about it, and beg me not to "reveal" the secret, that would mean not to tell any one about it. When you make a revelation, that is, reveal what you have done, you tell something that was not known before.

Now whenever a man has had the thoughts of God, a revelation of God has come to him; and we find that in almost all these sixty-six books of the Bible, besides much history and grand poetry, we have accounts of many revelations of God.

I want you little folks to grow to love the Bible very much, and to think it the best book in the world. We get tired of most other books after we have read them a few times, but when we come to understand the Bible we never get tired of it. There is always something new and beautiful in it.

The most blessed thing about the Bible is the

story of Jesus, whom God sent to teach us and reveal Him to us. We may learn many things from reading about Joseph and Samuel, and David the shepherd boy. But none of them were like Jesus. They sometimes did very foolish and wicked things, but we read that Jesus was always good. So if all the Bible were lost except the little part of it which tells about Jesus, we should feel that we had the best part left.

The Bible tells us not only about God, and how good and wise He is, but it tells us also about ourselves, that we are His children, and have wandered away like lost sheep from their shepherd, and how, by God's wonderful love and mercy, we may grow to be worthy of being His sons and daughters, and able to "reveal" Him to those who do not know Him.





CHAPTER XVIII.

THE HEBREW STORY OF THE BEGINNINGS.

PROBABLY the first thing that a baby ever thinks of is to have plenty of milk and to be kept nice and warm.

After he gets a little older, he begins to think about his mother, and sees how she does every thing for him. So long as he is a baby he never knows much about her. It is some time before he begins to know and love her with that human love which is such a different thing from that kind of feeling which chickens and kittens have for their mothers.

Now a nation and a race grow very much in the same way that a baby does.

Away back in the dim, far-off ages of which we know so little, when the nations were in their baby-hood, they probably thought most of all about getting plenty of food, and of wearing something which should keep off the cold.

As time went on, they began to think of many other things, and to wonder about the great world in which they found themselves. They saw many

strange things which they could not understand at all, and they tried, in the best way they knew, to explain them.

As I have already told you, animals never wonder about themselves nor think about who made them. But all human beings, even the lowest savages, have wondered about the world and tried to explain to themselves how it was made and how every thing began.

Sometimes their ideas were very queer and seem silly to us. But we must remember that if we had never been taught we should probably have never thought out any thing better than did these poor people who were much like grown-up children.

Sometimes, as they lay out all night under the stars, watching their flocks of sheep, they began to wonder and think. They saw the bright moon come up from behind the mountains and slowly move across the sky, and they were afraid of this strange-shining thing.

They thought it must be alive, and so they would sometimes pray to it as if it were their god. They heard the wind rustling in the trees, and they thought this must be the whisperings of a god. So they built altars under them, and prayed to this god that spoke to them through the leaves. For many hundreds of years people believed in sacred trees, and listened, half in fear, to the secrets which the winds told to the leaves.

Sometimes they bowed down to sticks and stones, thinking that they were bewitched, or that a god lived in them. Sometimes they prayed to the great red sun, or made little images of their gods. It was hard for them to think of a god whom they could not see. They believed in many gods ; they knew nothing of the one, true God.

But among all these nations was one which, as far back as we can learn any thing about it, had a better and purer idea of God than any other. He was sometimes called Elohim, but more often Yahveh, or as we say,—Jehovah.

This people was the Hebrew. Their writings are more important than the religious writings of all the other ancient nations put together.

Among their oldest records are two accounts of how they thought every thing began. We do not know when, or by whom, they were written, but they are very simple and beautiful.

Many years after they were first written they were joined with other ancient stories which had been handed down from father to son, and this collection of stories was called the Book of Genesis. The word "Genesis" means very much the same as the word Beginning. This book, you must remember, was in the Hebrew language, and was written, not printed. This was probably more than twenty-five hundred years before there were any printed books.

Some of the stories of the creation told by other

ancient nations are a little like those of the Hebrews, but I know of none that are so grand, and simple, and so near to the truth as those in Genesis.

It is very surprising to find so long, long ago, when people knew so little, such stories of the beginnings as these.

The men who wrote these must have thought very deeply and have seen much more of the truth than did the other people among whom they lived. They did not know all the facts which we have since learned, about the world being round like a ball, and about its having taken hundreds of thousands of years to get ready for men to live upon it.

They did not know that the sun was made before the earth, and that the little stars which seem so small are really great suns themselves.

They thought, as every one else in those times did, that the earth was larger and more important than any thing else, and that the sun and moon and stars were made afterward simply for the benefit of the people upon the earth.

It is very natural that they should have thought this, for in their time, when people had none of the books and telescopes and wonderful instruments that we have now, they could not have known any better.

But the writers of these stories in Genesis did see that all things were not made at once. In one account we read how that the grass and trees grew

first, and afterwards that the animals were made, and last of all, the highest and noblest work of God, a human being. Most important of all was this,—they saw that one God made all things. This was a great thing to see in those times, when many people worshipped the sun or moon, or, worse still, prayed to idols which they themselves had made.

Another thing which they saw and which was one of the greatest thoughts that ever came to a man, was that God made man in His own image; that is, God made man, not like the animals who have no spirits, but of the same nature as Himself.

Many people had thought that men and women were no better than animals, but here was a man who said that men were made in God's image, and this was a great thought, greater than he himself could know.

The men who wrote these stories in this Book of the Beginnings did not know very much about God, for we find they speak of Him as "walking in the garden," and talking with a real voice which men could hear.

They thought that God had a body as we have. The Hebrews did not for a long time come to really know that the God whom they worshipped was the only one. But as time went on, they came to see that He was the only real God that there was, and unlike the gods of the heathen, was a Spirit and could not be represented by any thing men could make.



CHAPTER XIX.

STORIES IN GENESIS.

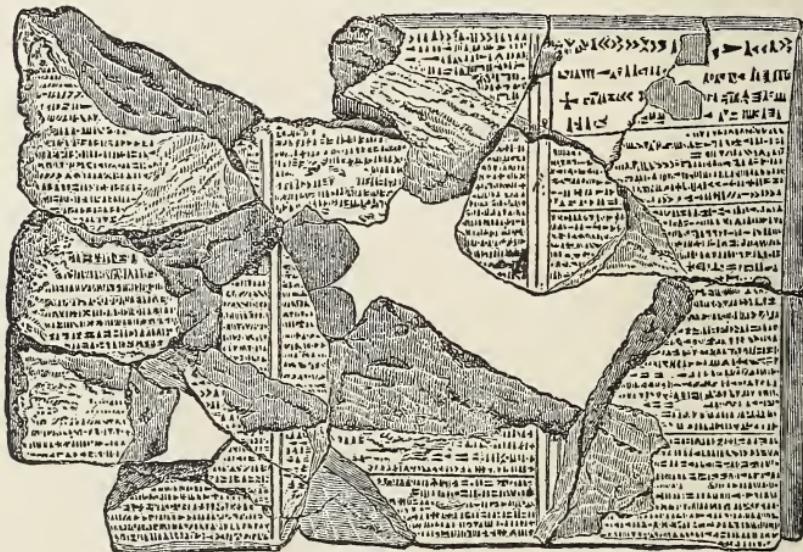
IN this Book of the Beginnings of which I told you, there are very many interesting stories, which, as they are among the oldest in the world, I suppose have been read more than any others that ever were written.

First of all come the stories of Adam and Eve, and of their sons, Cain and Abel. Then we come to the story of a great flood, and a good man, Noah, who built a great boat which he called an "ark," and went into it with all his children and stayed until the waters had gone down.

When I was a little girl I thought this story of the flood in Genesis was the only one ever written about it. But a few years ago, some men who were digging on the ruins of a very old heathen city found a broken tablet on which there was an account of this same flood. This is very interesting, but is a little different from the one in Genesis.

One story in this book gives the idea which the ancient Hebrews had about the different languages

which people speak. It is the story of the Tower of Babel. The man who wrote it thought that all people spoke one language at first, but that God was angry with them for trying to build a very high tower, and suddenly stopped them by giving them new languages, so that the workmen could not understand one another, and could not go on with the work. I do not know how this story grew; I sup-



BACK OF TABLET, WITH ACCOUNT OF THE FLOOD.

pose the man who first wrote it did not know either; he probably just wrote it down as it had been told to him.

The most interesting of all the stories in Genesis are those about Abram, who was afterwards called Abraham, the Father of the Faithful, and of his son Isaac, and Isaac's son, Jacob, and his family.

I hope you know all these stories; if not, you must be sure to ask some one to tell them to you, or read them for yourself in the Children's Bible.

Abram was one of the grandest men in all the ancient world. Down to the time when he lived, we know of no one who can in the least be compared to him, except one man only. He was called Zoroaster, and is said to have lived before Abram. He believed in one good Spirit, and he gave the world many noble thoughts, but we do not read of him in the Bible, and do not know much about him.

When Abram was young, he lived in a great city named Ur, which had a wall around it. In this city the people prayed to the moon. I have seen a hymn of praise to the moon goddess that was dug up not long ago in the ruins of this old city.

After Abraham had married his wife Sarah, and had lived many years in this eastern land, he felt that it was God's will for him to turn his face away from the land of his fathers and seek a new country. It must have been hard for him to go, but he was not afraid, for he was sure his God would guide him.

In that country, which was warmer than ours, people lived quite simply, especially outside of the cities. They had but little furniture, and sat on mats and slept in tents.

They had clothing made of cloth which the women spun and wove. The men wore long robes much like the women; they had long hair also, and some-

times wore bracelets just as the women did. They also often carried, or wore on the wrist, a seal cut in agate or hard stone. Many of those seals have been found buried in their tombs.

We read in the story that Abram had more than one wife at the same time. We shall find as we go on that many good men in those old times did things which we now know to be wrong, but then they probably never thought about it. Abram knew very little about God's will, and he had always been surrounded by heathen customs, so it is not strange that he should do as others did.

For a long time, you remember, he had no children, and in those days people loved very much to have children and were very sad when they had none. But after a while Isaac was born, when Abram was quite an old man.

How glad he must have been to see for the first time the little black-eyed baby who was wrapped up tight in the bandages which they used to put around babies in old times. To think that this dear little child was really his own, when he had been afraid he should never have one!

In some of the heathen nations which Abraham had seen, there had been a horrible custom of making sacrifices of the first-born children to the gods. The people were afraid of their gods and thought them very cruel. They thought the only way in which they could please them when they were angry

was to give them whatever they loved the most. Of course they loved their children more than any thing else, and it must have been a terribly sad thing for them to kill their dear little babies. It seems almost too dreadful to believe, but yet so strongly have many thousands of people felt this, that even down to almost the present time, many heathen women have thrown their children into the river to drown, because they thought their gods wanted them to do so.

Abraham was not a heathen ; he believed in the true God. But he did not know much about Him, and he could not understand as we do that He is a God of love. Abraham feared God. He knew how many nations sacrificed their sons to their gods, and one night the terrible thought came to him that his God would have him give up his darling, only son, Isaac. Like a brave, noble man, as he was, he never stopped even to tell any one, but the next day took Isaac and prepared to do what he thought God wanted him to do. You know the story ; how he bound the lad and, with aching heart, prepared to take this precious life which was so dear to him. But then, as clearly as if God had spoken to him with a real voice, came the thought that all the sacrifice which God asked of him was a willing heart. He saw at last clearly that God could never wish him to kill his own child, the child of faith and so many prayers. And looking around, he saw a sheep in the bushes, and gladly placed him upon the altar instead of his dear child.

Abraham lived to be very old, and had other sons, but never one whom he loved as he did Isaac. When Isaac was old enough to be married, Abraham did not want to have him take a wife from the women who lived around them, so you remember how the story tells of his sending his servant to find a wife for the young man from his own friends and father's family, who lived far away.

The story of how the servant found Rebekah, and gave her presents of gold rings and bracelets, and how she gave him water to drink at the well, is a charming one, and it gives us a pretty little picture of that simple life of which in those days we know so little. Isaac's mother, Sarah, had died, but his wife, Rebekah, became dear to him and comforted him after his mother's death.

Abraham lived to see his dear son Isaac married and happy, and then he also died and was buried by the side of his wife Sarah, in the rocky chamber, or tomb, which he had bought as a burial-place. This tomb, which is more than thirty-five hundred years old, is still standing. From what little I have told you about Abraham, you will find it hard to understand why it was that the Jews always looked back to him as the great head and father of their race. To understand this you must read all it says about him in these stories in Genesis, and remember that they were not written down until hundreds of years after he lived, so I suppose many stories about him

were forgotten. But although we do not know very much about him, we know enough to see that he was a very great and good man, and worthy to be the founder of a great race.

He had faith in God ; he dared to follow the voice of God which spoke through his own conscience ; he was willing to leave his home and live among strangers in a strange land when he thought it was God's will. He was even willing to give up what was dearest to him when he thought it was right. And so his name shall stand forever as the man of Faith and the Father of the Faithful.





CHAPTER XX.

ISAAC AND HIS CHILDREN.

ISAAC seems to have been a very different man from his father, Abraham. He lived a quiet life, and we do not read that he ever did any thing very remarkable. He and his children and great family of servants lived in tents and spent the most of their time in taking care of their sheep and cattle.

They dug wells, so that there should be plenty of water for their herds and flocks. They gave each of these wells a name and prized them very highly, for their cattle would have died without them. The people who lived around them, and also had herds and flocks, wanted their wells, and they often had quarrels about them. But Isaac seems to have been very fair and good-natured about it.

He had two little sons who were twins, whom you know were called Esau and Jacob. These boys grew up to be very different from each other. They slept at night on the same sheepskin spread beside their tent curtain. In the morning they ate their simple breakfast, very likely with their fingers, for

there probably were no spoons and certainly no forks in those days. After their breakfasts there were no lessons to be learned nor schools to go to.

I suppose neither they nor their father ever knew how to read a letter. The little twins played with the lambs and kids, and watched the shepherds, who were their father's slaves, as they watered their flocks and then drove them off into the fields or up on the hills to pasture.

As they grew up, Esau learned to shoot the deer with his arrows, and brought venison home for his father to eat. The story says that Isaac loved Esau, because he brought him this good venison to eat, which seems to me a rather selfish reason. Jacob did not go hunting ; he was a quiet man, and stayed at home, and planted a garden and raised vegetables. You know the story of how he met Esau one day, when he was hungry and faint, and refused to give him any food until Esau had given him his birthright.

This was a mean and selfish thing for Jacob to do ; it was taking an unfair advantage of his brother. In almost all countries in ancient times the oldest boy had what was called the birthright ; he received a special blessing from his father, and had special favor shown him. We have nothing like that now in our country, but in some nations the oldest son still has special favors, and gets much more of his father's money when he dies than any of the other children do. We do not think this is just and fair ;

we believe here in treating all the children of a family exactly alike ; but as this was not the custom in the time of Jacob, it was not fair for him to have treated his brother in the way he did. You remember, also, how, when Isaac was old and blind, Jacob told a lie and deceived his father, so as to get the blessing before the aged man should die.

After this you know how angry Esau was, and how he tried to kill his brother. So Jacob had to leave his home for fear of Esau ; and he started to go towards the place from which his mother had come when she left her father's home and came with Abraham's servant to be Isaac's wife.

On the journey he had a strange dream, which frightened him ; he dreamed that his God came and talked with him, and promised him that He would make him the father of a great family. So when he waked in the morning he set up a stone and poured oil on it.

This was a common custom among the people of those times. When any thing wonderful had taken place, they set up a stone to mark the spot.

When Jacob went on his journey he said to himself, if God would go with him, and take good care of him, and bring him safely back again, then he would serve Him, and He should be his God. Jacob knew very little about the real, true God, and he did not know that He always loves us, and that we ought to love and serve Him whether He gives us what we want or not.

You know the story ; how Jacob went on and came to his uncle's house ; and how, after a while, he married his cousins, Leah and Rachel ; and as the years went on had children, and servants, and a large family of his own, and a great many flocks and herds. Esau had married heathen women, and this had troubled Isaac and Rebekah very much, and they were glad to have Jacob marry among their own people.

We read in the story, however, that Jacob's uncle had images of gods, and that when, after many years, Jacob decided to take his great family and go back to the country where he was born, his wife Rachel stole these gods and carried them away with her, showing she believed in them also.

I suppose some of you little folks know what "moving" means in our days. You know how the furniture, and carpets, and pictures are packed up in boxes and sent off on the express wagon and carried to the new house, or else put upon the cars and carried to another city. But in those old times, when there were no wagons nor cars, and every thing had to be carried on the backs of camels or donkeys, it was a very different thing. There was not much furniture though, and no trunks of clothes, so the things were easily packed on the donkeys' backs, and Jacob, with his two wives and eleven sons, his daughters and servants, and his flocks and herds, set forth. The story tells us how he met his

brother Esau, whom he had not seen for years, and how they became friendly again.

After that we read how he came to Bethel, the place where one night, years before, he had that strange dream of which I told you. When he thought how lonely and sad he had been then, and when he looked around and saw the great family and the riches he had gained, he remembered the promise he had made that if God would bless him he would serve Him. So he took all the images of heathen gods which his wives and servants had and buried them, and built an altar to his own God who had so greatly blessed him. After that his name was changed and he was no longer called Jacob, but Israel.

Isaac, who was a very old man, lived to see Jacob return and bring with him his twelve sons ; the last one of all, the little baby, Benjamin, had been born on the way. After this Isaac died, and his two sons, Jacob and Esau, buried him.

The rest of the story of Israel belongs to the story of Joseph, who was the most famous of all his sons.

Among all ancient writings I do not know of one which is so interesting and delightful as the story of Joseph. I shall not stop to tell you about it, but if you do not know any other of these old Hebrew stories in this Book of the Beginnings, you must be sure and read this one.



CHAPTER XXI

THE LAND OF EGYPT.

IN order to understand the story of Joseph and of Moses, the next great Hebrew, who lived after him, we must know something about that strange, old country, Egypt, in which they lived for so many years.

Long before Abraham was born and the Hebrew people began to be a nation, Egypt was an old country. The people did not live in tents.

The kings and the rich people lived in houses built of stone, and the slaves and poor men lived in little huts of baked mud. There were many large cities filled with fine buildings. The finest of these were temples for the gods of the Egyptians. Many of these had long rows of sphinxes and obelisks which led up to them. The sphinxes were cut out of stone and were usually made to look like the body of a lion and the head of a woman. The obelisks were tall monuments looking something like Bunker Hill monument, only they were much smaller, and were cut out of one solid piece of stone.

If any of you have ever been in Central Park in New York City, I suppose you know what an Egyptian obelisk is, for there is one there which was brought all the way across the ocean from Egypt only a few years ago. It has a curious kind of writing carved on the outside of it, and it is very old indeed. It looks like the very same obelisks which Jacob and Joseph saw when they were in Egypt.

The Egyptians were very intelligent people for the time in which they lived, and knew much more than most other nations.

They knew something about the stars, and could divide the year into twelve months, and these into three hundred and sixty-five days. They knew how to make glass and dishes of porcelain, and they could cut precious stones, like rubies and diamonds, and make many curious things.

They could build boats and knew how to make swords and daggers and shields to use in time of war. They learned also to make wheels, and they used these in their war chariots.

There were few trees in the land of Egypt ; there were no green hills and little brooks running over the pebbles ; there were no pretty little valleys and meadows filled with wild flowers, such as we see in our country. There was nothing in nature for the Egyptians to see as they looked around them but three or four great things. There was the broad,

clear, beautiful blue sky over their heads, with never a cloud in it; no black thunder-clouds, nor soft white clouds, nor red sunset-clouds; always the same clear blue, from which the bright sun by day, or the far-away stars by night, shone through all the time. Then there was the great, level desert, stretching out on all sides, just as the ocean looks when one is on a ship. And through this great, level country flowed one great river, the only river in all the land.

The Egyptians did not know how to make beautiful statues and temples as the Greeks did; but every thing, instead of being beautiful, was very large and strong and grand.

They had many stone quarries in which thousands of slaves worked, cutting out huge blocks of stone.

The most wonderful things which the Egyptians ever made were the Pyramids. These were built of immense masses of stone. Some of these stones are so large that with all our machinery and improved tools and instruments for working, we, in our time, could never have lifted them and put them into place. No one knows how the Egyptians ever did it. Their work is a wonder to every one.

These pyramids were built for the tombs of kings. After they died their bodies were put into a little chamber in the centre of the great mass of stones.

It took many years to build these, and tens of thousands of unhappy slaves were forced to work

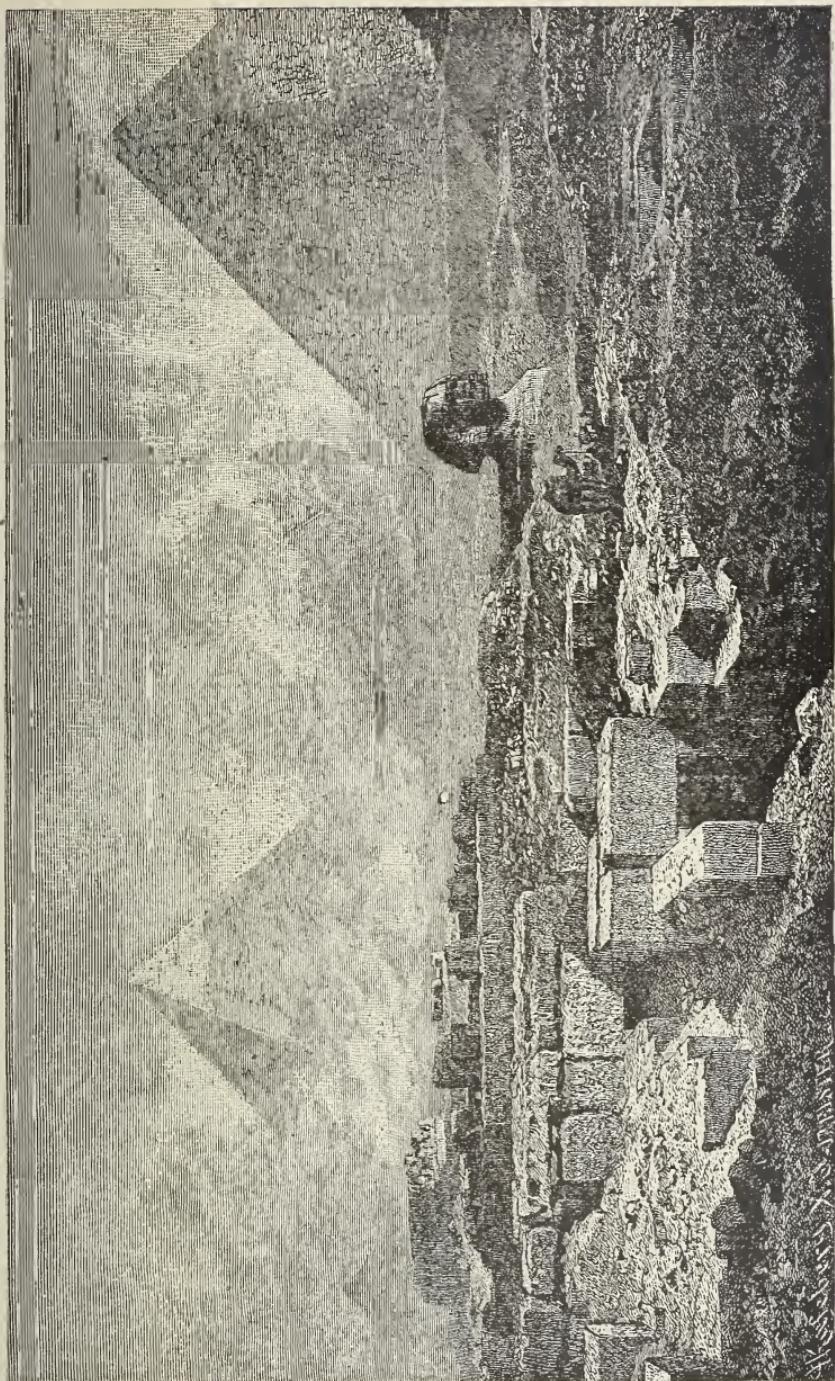
upon them. One can now climb to the top of the highest pyramid, because the smooth outside stones have been carried away for building, and its surface is no longer a straight slope, but is like a very long flight of stairs.

If you should climb to the top of the Great Pyramid you would see a strange sight. Beneath your feet would be great, heavy stones, nicely cut and fitted together, brought there by the toiling slaves thousands of years ago. On one side, stretching out as far as where the sky seems to meet the earth, would be the great sandy desert. No one dares travel over this on foot or on horseback, only on the backs of camels, who are called the "ships of the desert."

If you turned to look on the other side you would see a long, broad river coming from the south and flowing towards the north. This was the great river Nile. Without this wonderful river no one could have lived in this country where there is scarcely any rain. This broad stream overflowed its banks every year and carried water and mud several miles back from its borders towards the desert.

Wherever the water sank into the soil, grass and plants and trees grew, so that a long, narrow strip of land like a green ribbon stretched along the banks of the river.

The hot winds of the desert forever blew the



THE PYRAMIDS AND SPHINX.

yellow, shifting sands towards the fields and groves along the river's bank, but the great Nile never failed to bring them the precious waters and keep them fresh and green.

Would you not like to stand on this great pyramid, which towers up into the air, higher than almost any thing ever built by man, except the great Washington monument at Washington? Would it not seem strange to look upon this immense tomb of the old Egyptian king and think that this very same pyramid was standing there on the edge of the desert when Abraham, and Jacob, and Joseph, and Moses were in Egypt? I suppose you all know many people who like old furniture and pictures, and cups and saucers, and are very happy if they can show you the wedding dress of their great-grandmother who lived only one hundred years ago. But think of seeing something like these pyramids, which are at least forty hundred years old!

The pyramids were the most wonderful, but also the most foolish kind of tombs ever built. Nothing could be more useless than to make so many thousand men work for so many years, to pile up these great blocks of stone. As we look at it, a simple grave and a plain tombstone would have done as well. But the ancient Egyptian kings did not think so. They were proud and wished to make themselves famous, so that they should always be remembered in some way.

In this warm country where people did not have to wear many clothes and could live chiefly on dates and other things which grew in abundance, it was easy to support many men very cheaply. The kings in these days had great power and could do very much as they pleased, so they forced men to work for them for little or no pay.

The Egyptians believed as we do that their souls would not die. But, unlike us, they believed that after a great many years the soul of the dead man would come back and live again in his body. So you see one reason why they were very anxious to have their bodies kept after death in a very strong, safe place, cut out of the rock. After their friends died, they had their flesh preserved in such a way that it would not decay and could be kept for thousands of years. The bodies thus preserved were called "mummies," and I presume some of you have seen a few of them in museums. They are brown and withered and very unpleasant to look at.

The religion of the Egyptians was a very curious one. Some of the wisest men believed in one God. But as they thought of His goodness, and power, and justice, of His sending the rain, of His creating all life, and of the many things which belong to God's nature, they tried to make some kind of a sign or image, which should stand for each one of their different thoughts about God. In a little while the ignorant people began to take these images

which stood as signs for the different thoughts about God, as real gods themselves. Many of these images had the body like that of a man and the head like that of a hawk or some other kind of bird or animal.

Some live animals were thought to be sacred and were kept in temples and were carefully waited upon by priests. Cats and crocodiles and sometimes bulls and hawks were considered so sacred that if a man killed one even by accident he was put to death.

There were a great many priests; they knew much more than the soldiers and the common people. They could read and write and had a great deal of power over the minds of the ignorant. When we read in the story of Moses that "he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," I think we can understand now a little about what that means. We see that he lived in a very civilized country, and that in the cities, among the scholars and wise men of his time, he must have seen a great deal that was very rich and splendid, as well as much that was very cruel and wicked.

His life was certainly quite different from that of the simple herdsmen, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and we shall see that this education which he received had a great deal to do in preparing him to be the wise leader of his people.



CHAPTER XXII.

MOSES.

THE last story which we find written in Genesis is about Joseph. We learn what a great and famous man he became, and how his eleven brothers and their families came and lived with him in Egypt.

For many, many years they lived in Egypt, and as time went on, these descendants of Israel increased in number and became a great people.

We hear nothing about them for very many years. Although they lived in Egypt they kept themselves as a separate people, and did not worship the gods of the Egyptians. But they were poor and ignorant, and had no great teacher or leader, and no one to protect them from the cruelty of the Egyptians. At last God raised up for them a leader, who was one of the greatest men who ever lived. This man was Moses, who became their teacher and guide. He led them out from this land in which they were slaves to the cruel king, back to the land from which their fathers had come, years before.

The story of the Hebrews leaving Egypt is told

in the second book of the Old Testament. This book is called Exodus, because this word means a going out. When a number of people rush out of a room, we sometimes say : "What an exodus!"

We do not know who wrote this interesting book, or the next three books which come after it, which tell us the story of Moses' life and the laws which he gave to the Hebrew people. Probably Moses himself wrote part of them.

I suppose you all know the story of Moses in the bulrushes. You know how the poor Hebrew mother did not dare keep her baby with her, and so when he was a few months old, she put him into a little basket which was water-tight, and let him float in the river among the tall grasses. You know the story of how the king's daughter found him and brought him up as if he were her own little boy. Instead of living in a poor, little hut, he was brought up in a great palace. Many boys would have been spoiled by such a life. They would have been ashamed of belonging to a poor, despised race. But though Moses lived like a prince, he never forgot the poor Hebrews, and not all the fine, rich things which he saw about him could make him forget the selfishness of the men who were abusing his people.

He learned many things at the court of the king, and what he learned he kept in his mind until the time when he obeyed God's call to go to the king, Pharaoh, and ask him to let the Hebrew people go.

When I say God called him, you must remember that whenever the Bible writers speak of God's voice, or of His saying any thing to them, it was probably, simply the Spirit of God speaking through their own minds.

The stories which have come down to us contain very astonishing accounts of Moses' efforts to make Pharaoh promise to let the people go. Exactly what did really happen I suppose we shall never know. The writer of the account, whoever he was, thought that God hardened Pharaoh's heart and made him wicked. But we know this could not have been so; as another writer in the Bible said, many years later: "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for He tempteth no man."

We read in the story of Moses that he brought down many dreadful curses upon the Egyptians, when, as it appears, their king was chiefly to blame. This seems unjust, and we know that God could not have commanded any thing which was unjust or cruel.

In old times, and even now in some countries, children are punished for their father's sins. We find in many of the Hebrew stories that Moses and other great leaders commanded many innocent people to be put to death, and thought that this was God's will. If they had known more about God, they would not have thought so. They thought as Abraham did, that God was very much like a great

man who could get angry and would kill his enemies, just as a king might do. They thought he cared only for the Hebrews ; they did not know that He was the God of the whole world, and loved the Egyptians and all other nations too. It took many hundred years for them to come to see that great truth. Not until Jesus came did the world begin to learn that all people are born with the same birth-right, and can all become God's children.

But although Moses knew less than many men not so great as he, who were fortunate enough to live later, when the world was wiser, yet he knew vastly more than any other man of his time.

After the Egyptian king had at last let the people go, and they had started off on their long, tiresome journey, I suppose Moses must have felt almost crushed by the great care which rested on him. The Hebrews were a hard people to manage, and Moses felt that he must make some laws for them to live in an orderly, quiet way. They often got into disputes and needed some one to settle their quarrels, so Moses very wisely separated all the men, women, and children into different divisions and chose a judge for each one; in this way he gained time for himself to give to more important things.



CHAPTER XXIII.

THE TEN WORDS.

AFTER the Hebrews in their wanderings had come to a lofty mountain named Sinai, they rested there, and Moses left them in the valley and went alone up the rugged mountain side. His mind was full of many things, and he wanted to have time to think and learn what he ought to do.

I can imagine how the brave old man must have looked as, with his head bowed on his hands, he sat high up on the rocky cliffs. Beneath him were the drifting clouds, and when they parted, he could look down and see far away in the valley the great camp with its thousands of tents. He saw the hosts of people whom he had led out of slavery, and his heart ached as he thought of their ignorance and wickedness, and of how he alone must guide and teach them. But he trusted in his God and his courage did not fail.

The night came on, and as he lay down alone in the silence under the stars, no doubt he thought of all his strange, past life from his childhood in the palace, to his old age in the desert ; and the grand, sweet thought

came to him, as it had come before, that the great Unseen Power, which had guided him so far, was with him and in him, and must speak through him.

He thought of the Egyptian gods which he had seen carved out of stone by men's hands. He knew the Hebrews had seen these all their lives, and that they would be tempted to make gods like them. He knew it was hard for them to think of a God who could not be seen, and he thought that, first and most important of all, he must write a law for his people which should forbid their ever trying to make an image of their God.

So, before going down from the mountain, upon a block of stone he cut in Hebrew letters the first law, which put into English reads in these words :

“Thou shalt have none other gods before me.”

Then came the second law, which means very much the same as the first one :

“Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven [that is a carved] image nor the likeness of any form that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them nor serve them; for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity [that is the sins] of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.”

Nothing could have been truer or better for Moses

to tell his people than this. If grown people are ignorant and wicked, their children, and grandchildren, and great-grandchildren will probably be either lazy, or ill, or wicked, and will suffer the consequences of their fathers being bad men. But, on the other hand, if their parents are wise and good, the children are almost sure to grow up happy and well and with a liking for good things.

The third commandment which Moses wrote, was to teach his people not to swear or use the name of God carelessly. It was this:

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.”

The fourth law was about keeping one day in seven for the service of God.

“Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a sabbath unto the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it.”

The setting apart one day in seven was probably not a wholly new thing. It is thought that some other ancient people had this custom.

Nothing could have been wiser than to teach those people to turn aside from their work, and rest and think about higher things as often as once a week. They had no Bibles, they could not have read them if they had them, and they would have quite forgotten about God if this one day in seven had not been set apart for them. Although we have the Bible and many good books to read during the week, we too need it and cannot do without it in this busy world where men and women get so little rest and think so little about the best things.

I hope that all the children who read this will always find Sunday the best and brightest day of the whole week, even if the playthings are put away. If Moses had lived in our time, and known more about God, and that He is never tired and never rests, and if he had known more about how God made the world, he would have given a different reason to the Hebrews for keeping a day of rest. The true reason for keeping it, of course, is that we need it and cannot do without it.

The fifth law was one of the most important for us all to remember. Among all the ten laws there is not one so important for little American boys and girls to think of as this :

“Honor thy father and mother that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”

It is true that people who obey the wise teachings

of their fathers and mothers, as a general thing, live longer than those who do not ; but this is not the best reason for honoring them. We should obey this law because it is right. To be disrespectful to a good and kind father and mother is one of the worst things a child can do.

The other laws are easy to understand ; they taught the people not to kill, not to be impure, not to steal, nor tell lies about their neighbors, nor to covet any thing that belonged to their neighbor.

They are :

“ *Thou shalt do no murder.* ”

“ *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* ”

“ *Thou shalt not steal.* ”

“ *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.* ”

“ *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor’s.* ”

These ten commandments, or “ words,” as they were called, have, I suppose, become the most famous laws ever written. Surely no one in that age who had not been guided and taught by God could have written them.

As the great mountain Sinai rose up high above the plain, so did the thoughts of this man, inspired of God, rise high above those of the simple, ignorant people, who, even while he was writing these very

words, were making for themselves a golden image of a calf, and falling down before it as they had seen the Egyptians do.

If a wise man were writing ten laws for the Americans, he perhaps would write something a little different. He would not say so much as Moses did against carving idols, for we are in no danger of doing that ; but I think he would be sure to say that we must not care for riches and pleasure so much as to make us think less about God ; and he would say that above all things we must always speak the truth, and be unselfish.

At another time, however, Moses did give a commandment which means much the same. It was this : “ *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*”





CHAPTER XXIV.

THE LAWS OF THE HEBREWS.

WE read in the story of the travels of the Hebrew people that they made, at Moses' command, a large, beautiful tent. This tent was called the Tabernacle, and was so made that it could be put together and taken to pieces very easily, and thus be carried on the journey. On the outside of this Tabernacle was a curtain of goatskin, and on the inside were ten embroidered curtains of blue, and purple, and scarlet fastened to each other by clasps of gold.

Within the Tabernacle were kept the most precious things which the Hebrew priests used in their religious services.

Among these were two altars made of brass, and a candlestick, and dishes, and spoons made of gold. But the most important of all was a beautiful chest of gold called the "ark." Within this were placed the ten commandments which Moses had written on the two stone slabs. Above the ark, on what was called the "mercy-seat," were two golden angels

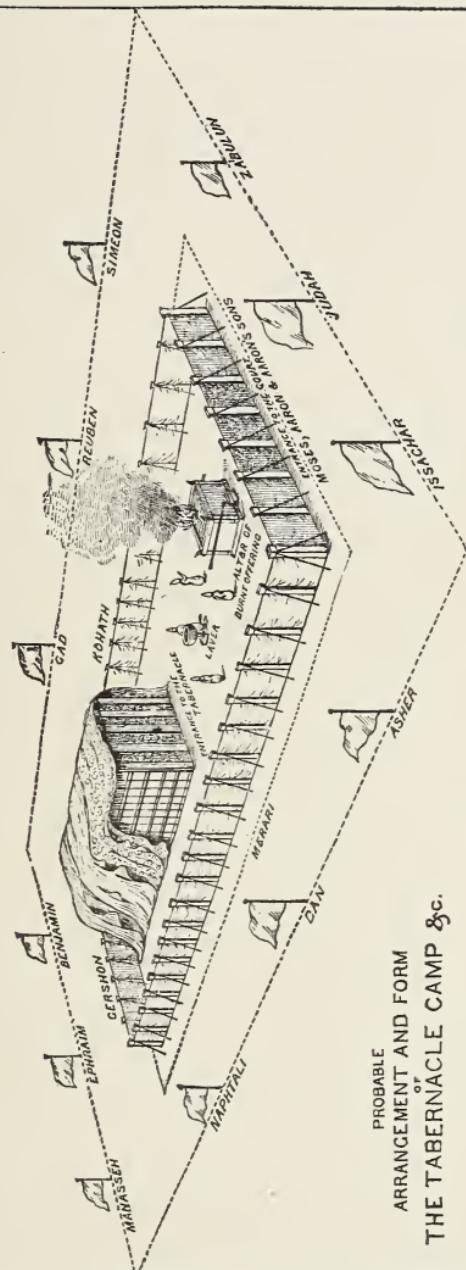
with wings outstretched as if they were covering and protecting the precious contents of the chest.

In the book of the Exodus we find a very long and careful description of every part of the Tabernacle and every thing that was in it. In all these matters Moses borrowed many ideas from the Egyptians, taking only what was good and leaving out what was wrong and harmful.

In old times it was generally the custom for a young man to work at the same business which his father had. In Egypt this had been the custom; the son of a soldier was usually a soldier, and the son of a priest was a priest. We should think it unwise and even wrong to force every minister's son to be a minister, for some sons would not be good enough nor know enough for that. But among the ancient peoples the priests did not preach and were not much like our ministers, so it was quite a different thing when every priest's son became a priest.

The business of the priests was chiefly to attend to the sacrifices and to study the laws which were written which told them how to perform their duties.

Moses and his brother Aaron were sons of a man who belonged to the descendants of one of Israel's sons, named Levi. All the descendants of each son formed a separate tribe by themselves. Those descended from Levi were called the Levites. Moses



PROBABLE
ARRANGEMENT
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THE TABERNACLE CAMP
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chose his brother Aaron and his sons and their descendants to be priests forever to the Hebrew people.

The next book in the Bible, after the Book of Exodus, is called Leviticus, and contains the laws which the priests were to observe and teach.

Some of these laws are very curious, and are somewhat like the religious laws which we find in certain heathen countries to which we now send Christian missionaries. They have a great deal to say about cleanliness and uncleanness. Unclean does not mean soiled, as you would suppose it did. Any one who ate of certain animals which were forbidden food, or who touched an animal that had died, or any one who had certain sicknesses, was called "unclean." Most of the animals and birds which the Hebrews were told not to eat are those which we ourselves do not like to eat, such as the cat and dog, and many others that have paws. But some things, like pork, bear meat, lobsters, oysters, and clams, which we eat, were forbidden to them.

Many of the Hebrew laws would not be fitted for civilized people like ourselves, but were very useful in teaching these ignorant, wild people to be clean, and decent, and orderly. They had seen all kinds of shameful sins among the Egyptians and other heathen nations, and Moses with wonderful wisdom tried to teach them to keep their bodies clean, and their hearts and minds pure.

Like all other nations, the Hebrews offered sacrifices and offerings to their God, whom they called Jehovah. These sacrifices were generally of lambs or goats, or of cattle. Sometimes if a man had touched a dead animal and thus made himself "unclean," or had done any thing that was wrong, and he wanted the priest to make what was called a "guilt offering," he brought some young pigeons, or, if he could not afford that, some fine flour. The priest would kill the birds and burn their bodies on the altar, or else burn a handful of the flour, and then the man would feel that this was a sign that he had atoned for the wrong and was forgiven.

The people were taught to always bring the best that they had for an offering to Jehovah. If they brought a lamb or a goat, it must always be a perfect one, never an old or lame one.

There were many different kinds of offerings: they were called peace offerings, heave offerings, wave offerings, meal offerings, sin and burnt offerings. Probably the common people understood very little of what it all meant. But they must have felt very solemn as they saw the priest come out from under the curtains of the Tabernacle, where they were never allowed to enter. They saw him in his linen robes stand before the altar and place the flesh of the animals on the fire, which was never allowed to go out. They saw the smoke rise up through the still air into the blue sky, and they must have felt a

strange fear and wonder as they thought of the great unseen God to whom this sacrifice was offered.

The people were taught that if they broke the law, they were often just as guilty if they did not intend to do it, as if they had meant to. We still find this notion among many heathen people, but the Jews themselves, as time went on and they came to know more about God, saw that he who means to do wrong is a thousand times more wicked than the man who does wrong by mistake.

A great many kinds of wrong-doing were punished by death. The children were taught to be very respectful to their parents, and any man who cursed his father or mother was put to death. The commonest way to do this was to take them outside the camp and stone them to death.

Some of the things which Moses commanded seem very cruel and dreadful to us. We read that Jehovah commanded Moses to tell the people to stone a man to death because he gathered sticks on the Sabbath day, and there are many stories of God's commanding women and little children to be put to death because their fathers had done wrong. But I need not tell you again that this was Moses' command, not God's. In all these commands Moses did only what he thought was right. Most of his laws were far wiser and nobler than any that had up to that time ever been known anywhere in the world, and the only wonder is that he made so few mistakes.

Moses was called the meekest of all men. In spite of being so wise, and such a great leader, he was never proud and selfish, but was always glad when other people could do as well as he. A great many wonderful stories have come down to us about Moses, but I do not know of any story which shows how noble and sweet this old man was better than this one which I will tell you.

One day two men in the camp of the Hebrews began to prophesy as Moses had done, and a young man who thought Moses would not like it came and told him about it. Another man named Joshua, who afterwards became a great general, said : "My lord Moses, forbid them." But Moses, not thinking of himself first, but caring more than all besides for God's glory, said : "Art thou jealous for my sake? Would God that all Jehovah's people were prophets, that Jehovah would put his spirit upon them!" He would have been willing to become the very least among them all, if any one else could have led the people better than he.





CHAPTER XXV.

THE PROMISED LAND.

FTER the twelve tribes of Israel had wandered many years, and Moses had become very old and felt that he should soon die, he called the people together and talked to them. He told them that God was going to lead them into the land of Canaan, where Jacob had lived before he and his sons went down into Egypt. He knew that many of the older ones had died, and many of the young people had been born since they had left Egypt, and he was afraid that they would not remember how cruelly they had suffered, and how God had delivered them and guided them. So he talked to the people very seriously, and told them just how they ought to live when they got back to the land of their fathers.

Moses was above all things afraid that they would soon forget to pray to the true God whom they could not see, and would make images of Him and worship them as the people did in Egypt and in the country to which they were going. Over and over again he warned them against this, and told them

that if they would follow the true God, and would not marry heathen women, nor have any thing to do with the heathen, God would bless them and make them happy and rich, and give them long lives. But if they should forget Him and bow down to idols, He would curse, and kill, and destroy them, and scatter them all over the face of the earth. He was so afraid they would mix with heathen people that he told them to drive out the heathen from the land into which they were going, and to take it for themselves.

He told the fathers to teach the children the law of God, and to tell them over and over again their wonderful history, for He had chosen them out from all other nations to be His own special people.

Last of all, the old man said with earnest voice, as he looked upon those whom he had so loved, and whom he must now leave: "I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse; therefore choose life, that thou mayst live; . . . to love Jehovah thy God, to obey His voice, and to cling unto Him; for He is thy life."

After Moses had done speaking to the people, he went alone up on a mountain, from which he could look over into the Promised Land and see where his people were to go, and there he died.

After Moses' death a great general, named Joshua, became the leader of the Hebrews. He was not so

great nor wise a man as Moses, but he was “strong and of good courage,” and helped the people drive out the nations who lived in the land of Canaan. There were many tribes of them, just as there were many tribes of the Hebrews. The stories of the wars between them and the Hebrews are told in the book called Joshua. We see that like all other wars of ancient times, they were very cruel and dreadful, and the soldiers not only killed the men, but also the helpless women and children who did not fight. In our times, though wars are still very dreadful and cruel, no soldier thinks of hurting a woman or child.

Joshua thought it quite right to fight in this way, for he supposed that it was God’s will. After his men had killed or driven away most of the nations who held the land which they wanted, he divided it among the twelve different tribes of Israel. The men of the tribe of Levi, who were not to be soldiers or farmers like the others, but priests, were given “forty-eight cities,” the story says. Probably they were very small ones, no larger than little villages. Besides these cities for the Levites, we read of there being what were called “cities of refuge.”

In old times, when there were no courts of justice such as we have, if a man killed another, the nearest of kin to the murdered man felt it his duty to follow and find the murderer and kill him. Sometimes a man killed another by accident, when he did not mean to, and in order that he might escape from the

relatives of him who had been killed, Joshua allowed such men to fly to the “cities of refuge,” where they would be safe.

The new country into which the Israelites came was very different from Egypt. It was much smaller, and the climate was cooler. On the west side of it was the great sea. On the south, was the country through which they had travelled on their way from Egypt. Away off to the northeast were the great nations from which Abraham, the father of their race, had come. The Jordan, which was the most important river, flowed through the middle of the country, and emptied its waters into a wonderful salt sea which is called the Dead Sea. The water is much saltier than that of the ocean, and no fish can live in it. The river Jordan was not at all like the Nile. It did not overflow its banks, and it was very much smaller than the broad river of Egypt which bore great vessels on its waters.

In this land of Canaan to which the Hebrews had come, there were no fine palaces, and temples, and pyramids, no great, sandy desert, and cloudless sky, such as their fathers had seen in Egypt.

Here were mountains and green hills covered with cedar trees. Here were groves of olive trees, and clear running brooks, and little plains and meadows. It was a beautiful country, and the Hebrews came to love it very dearly. I suppose no people in all the world ever grew to love their own land and race

as these children of Israel did. They felt they were better and purer than any other nation, and that God would especially bless them. So the land that He had given them, and in which their father Abraham was buried, became very dear to them. They had brought the bones of Joseph out of Egypt with them, and they buried them here in the land where he had been born.





CHAPTER XXVI.

JUDGES.

THE next of the Hebrew books, after the book of Joshua, is called Judges. This tells us about what the Israelites did after the death of their great general Joshua.

The people had no king and no great leader, but they had judges who settled their disputes.

There are several interesting stories in this book, though most of them are not very important for you to know.

One of these is about a brave soldier named Jephtha, who made a solemn promise, or vow, as it was called, that if Jehovah would help him to beat the enemy in battle, when he returned home he would offer up as a sacrifice the first thing that came out of his house to meet him. I suppose he never thought what a terribly foolish and thoughtless thing this was for him to promise. Probably he thought it might be only a cow or a goat that he should first see.

But as he came back from the battle, where he

had beaten the enemy, whom should he see but his only child, his fair young daughter, come out with her girl friends to meet him singing and dancing to welcome him home. When the poor father saw that, he tore his clothes and cried out in agony. Then he told her of his vow, and that he had promised it to Jehovah and could not take it back. Women were sometimes allowed to break their vows, but Moses had commanded that every man should perform whatever he had vowed to Jehovah. So she bade him do as he had promised, and Jephtha, not knowing that God would not want him to keep such a dreadful vow, sacrificed his dear child.

This story gives us a little idea of that strange life of those ancient people of whom we know so little. We read among the stories of the Greeks of a king who sacrificed his dear young daughter, believing that the gods required this terrible thing of him.

The strangest stories in the book of Judges are about a strong man named Samson, who, it is said, killed a thousand men with the jawbone of an ass, and did many other things just as remarkable. The stories of Samson which the Hebrews told, make us think of Hercules, the strong man of whom the Greeks told many famous stories.

One of the prettiest of all the stories of this time of the Judges is about a poor young widow named Ruth. Only two books in the Bible are named after women, and one of these is named after her.

The first really great man of whom we read after the time of Joshua was a prophet named Samuel.

I wonder if you know what a prophet means. As we go on through the books of the Hebrews, we shall find a great deal said about prophets, so we may as well stop here and learn a little about them.

Perhaps you think a prophet is a wise man who can tell what is going to happen in the future. It is true that many of the prophets being wise men and knowing much more than the common people, did tell many things which afterwards came to pass, but this was one of the least important things which they did. Sometimes there were false prophets, but the true prophets were men of God who spoke His truth to the people, and preached to them and taught them.

Sometimes we meet persons nowadays who tell things which afterwards come to pass in a wonderful way. These people are sometimes wise men who carefully study the signs of the times; sometimes they are common men who make shrewd guesses, but we can hardly call them prophets. The chief work of the Hebrew prophets was to arouse their nation from its sins and to be great religious teachers.



CHAPTER XXVII.

THE OLD PROPHET AND THE YOUNG KING.

THE two books of the Hebrews which are called Samuel tell us a great deal about the prophet for whom the books are named.

I suppose if you know any Bible stories at all, you know about the little Hebrew boy, Samuel, who lived with the old priest Eli, in the temple of Shiloh, and whose mother came once a year and brought him a little coat. Perhaps you have seen some little marble or plaster statues of a child kneeling in prayer, which is called "Samuel Praying." I have seen such, many times in the stores, for the story of the good little Samuel to whom God spoke, is very well known.

We read that the ark of God, the golden chest which Moses had made, was taken away from the Israelites by the heathen tribes of Philistines. The neighboring tribes had not all been driven out of their land, and for many years they were at war with the Hebrews. When the old priest, Eli, heard of this, it broke his heart, and he fell down and died.

After the ark had been carried away, it was not brought back for many years, and the people began to forget about God, and to make idols like the heathen around them.

Samuel grew up to be a man, and being the great prophet that he was, he saw the sin of the people and tried to wake them up to the knowledge of it. He led them back to serve the true God, and he went around from one part of the country to the other, judging the people, settling their disputes, and teaching them what to do.

After a while the Hebrews thought they would like a king to lead and guide them. Samuel was now an old man; when the people came and said they wanted a king, he told them he did not think it was a good plan. He said a king would not let them have their own way. If they had a king they would have to pay him money and become his servants.

But the people would not listen to Samuel. They had never had a king, and they thought they would like one, for he would help to unite the twelve different tribes together so that they could fight their enemies better.

So at last Samuel felt that it was God's will, and he appointed a handsome young man, named Saul, to be their king. That is, he poured oil on his head, which was the ancient way of showing that a man was to be king. Saul was a tall man, a head and shoulders taller than other men, and looked like a king.

The Philistines again attacked the people, and Saul led them into battle and was so strong and brave himself, that he gave courage to his men and drove back the enemy. Although Saul was a king, he lived a simple life, very different from the great kings of Egypt of whom I told you. The people were still poor, and had no great palaces or temples. There was not even a blacksmith in all the country, so when the Israelites wanted to sharpen their axes or spears they had to go to the blacksmiths among the Philistines.

Samuel had been very sorry to have the Hebrews choose a king. He was sorry also to find that though Saul was a brave soldier, he was not always wise and good, and was not the best leader for the people.

Samuel felt that a wiser man ought to be chosen to take his place, but he was afraid of Saul and did not dare to let him know about it. So he went to the little town of Bethlehem, where lived a man named Jesse, who had seven sons. The people were afraid when they saw him come, for he was a wise old man and had been their judge, and I suppose he must have been a stern man, who had a great power over the minds of the poor ignorant people. He told them not to be afraid, for he came peaceably, and was going to offer sacrifice there. After the sacrifice, he asked Jesse to let him see his sons, and when he showed Samuel his youngest son, named

David, the old prophet knew that this was the one whom he was to anoint king over Israel. David was a rosy-cheeked lad who had been called in from the pasture, where he was taking care of his sheep, in order to see the great prophet who had asked for him.

It must have seemed very strange to him, the youngest of all the brothers, to be chosen for this high honor. I suppose he did not understand it clearly and hardly knew what it meant.

Now Saul was not happy, and sometimes he felt very gloomy and hateful, and made his friends and servants afraid of him. They thought it would be a good plan to find some one who could make pleasant music and please the king when he was sad and ill-tempered. So they sent for David, who knew how to play very sweetly on the harp. The harp which David had was much smaller than those which are used now, and I do not suppose that the music was any thing which we should enjoy very much.

In old times people knew very little about music. Long after the time when the most beautiful churches, and pictures, and statues had been made, and the best poetry written, came the knowledge of beautiful music. So, in ancient times, we must not think of there being any music like that which we enjoy. But whatever they had, they liked perhaps as much as we like our music, and when the bright-

faced lad took his harp and struck the strings, the king's face would brighten and his heart grow light, and the sadness would disappear.

There is one story about David which I suppose you all know, so I shall not tell it ; I mean the story of his killing the giant, Goliath, by a little pebble thrown from his sling.

All the people were so glad to have this great giant killed, that they sang praises and did great honor to the young man. But this made Saul jealous. You see he was selfish, and wanted to be first, and to receive the most praise.

We do not have to look far to find people who are just like Saul, and there are few things so unlovely as this bitter jealousy, which makes one always want to dress the best, to be the first in the games, and to take no pleasure in seeing others have the best things.

But there was one noble young man who was not jealous, and who loved David as he loved his own life. This was Jonathan, the son of the king. The young prince gave the shepherd lad his own robe and every thing that he wore, even his sword. These two young men loved each other so much, that down to this day when we see two men who would do any thing, even die for each other, we say their love is “like the love of David and Jonathan.”



CHAPTER XXVIII.

KING DAVID.

OF all the great men whom the Hebrews honored, no name except those of Abraham and Moses, was so dear as that of David, the man who was a shepherd, a soldier, a king, a prophet, and a poet.

You heard how King Saul began to be jealous of this brave young man whom the people praised. One day, when David was playing on his harp before the king, Saul became very angry and threw his spear at him, meaning to kill him. But David ran away and saved his life.

David had married Saul's daughter, the Princess Michal, who loved him very much; when Saul sent to her house to find David and kill him, she put an image in the bed so that the king's servants should think that David was there, and then she secretly helped her husband to get down out of the window at night and escape from her father.

For a very long time after this, David did not dare to go near the king, though his friend, the good

Prince Jonathan, tried to get his father to treat David kindly; for, as the writer of the story says, Jonathan loved David "as he loved his own soul."

But Saul became angry at Jonathan also, and threw his spear at his own son. So Jonathan knew that Saul really meant to kill David, and he sadly left the king's house and went out into a field where David was hiding, and told him. They knew then that they must part, perhaps forever, and bursting into tears, the two friends kissed each other many times and said a sad good-bye. Jonathan went back to his father, and David fled from his own land and people, and lived with another king far away.

For a long time David lived the life of a soldier, fighting sometimes against the Philistines, and sometimes against Saul and his men who were trying to find him and kill him.

David and the men who followed him once went into a large, dark cave, and were hidden at the farther end of it, when they saw Saul enter and lie down to sleep. If David had wished to kill him, then would have been the time; but instead of killing his enemy, as he might easily have done, David quietly cut off a large piece of Saul's robe, and when Saul had awakened and gone out, David went after him and called, "My lord, the king." The king turned and looked and saw the very man for whom he was searching.

When Saul heard how respectfully and kindly he

spoke, and saw that David could have killed him and yet had not done so, his eyes filled with tears, and he was sorry and ashamed. He was honest enough to say so too. "You are better than I," he said; "you have returned good to me, while I did harm you. Now I know that you shall be king. Promise me therefore that you will not kill my children after me nor destroy my name." So David promised, and Saul returned home.

But as the time went on Saul again became angry against David and came with three thousand men to find him.

One night, when Saul was lying asleep in the camp, David came and took away the spear which Saul had stuck into the ground at his head. Then he went quietly away until he was at a great distance, when he called to the king. When Saul waked, and found a second time that David had been near enough to kill him, and had spared his life, he was again much ashamed and said: "See, I have acted like a fool, and done very wrong." So he blessed David and returned home.

Saul had little peace; he was almost always at war, and at last, in a great battle with the Philistines, his son Jonathan was killed, and Saul himself, seeing that he could not escape, told the man who carried his shield to draw his sword and kill him. The armor-bearer was afraid to do this, so Saul himself fell upon his own sword and died. Many men

were killed in this terrible battle, and the Israelites were beaten by the Philistines.

When David heard that the king and Jonathan were dead, he was very sad, and tore his garments, and mourned with tears and sighs.

I told you that David was a poet as well as a soldier, and here is a part of a poem which he composed on the death of the king and his dear friend :

“ Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives,
And in their death were not divided ;
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle !
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan,
Thy love to me was wonderful,
Passing the love of women.”

Perhaps this does not seem to you very much like poetry, for you notice that the words at the end of the lines do not sound alike, as they do in verses like this.

“ Twinkle, twinkle, little *star*
How I wonder what you *are*.”

You will find that the poetry of the Hebrews and Greeks and other ancient nations never had the ends of the lines sound alike as we have in our poetry.

There have never been any poems written more beautiful than some of the poems of David, and when you come to understand about them you will like them very much.

For some time after Saul’s death there was a great deal of trouble before it was decided who

should be king, but at last it was settled that David should be the ruler. Then began a new order of things, for David was a very different man from Saul. He remembered his promise to the king, and instead of treating Saul's family unkindly, he did all that he could for them. Only one was left alive, and he was lame. David sent for him, and took him into his own house, and treated him as his own son.

Up to the time of David, the famous old City of Jerusalem had not belonged to the Israelites, but to the neighboring people. David fought against them and took the city, and after that it was often called the "City of David." He got masons and carpenters, who built him a fine house in Jerusalem, in which he lived with his large family of wives and children and servants.

In fifteen years he had grown from the wild shepherd boy to be the great king of his people. He sent and brought the ark with the gold angels bending over it, and had it carried up into the city.

As the priests came, carrying the precious ark on their shoulders, the trumpets sounded, the people clapped their hands and danced and shouted, and King David himself, dressed in a white linen robe, took his harp in his hand and danced and sang and led his people on. It was a glorious day for Jerusalem, and perhaps the happiest one in all the life of the king; the ark was placed in the tent which had been made for it, and David himself, as the priest, offered sacrifices to Jehovah and blessed his people.



CHAPTER XXIX.

DAVID'S TROUBLES.

ALTHOUGH David was a great and good man he did one very terrible and wicked thing. He had a faithful soldier who had something which David very much wanted, and it was not possible for him to get it until after the soldier was dead. The more King David thought about it, the more he selfishly meant to have his own way and get what he wanted. He did not wish to kill the man openly and have the matter talked about, so he gave orders to have him put near the front when they were fighting, so that he would be sure to be shot by the arrows of the enemy. The general did as David told him to do, and the poor soldier fell in battle as the king meant to have him.

But this sin could not be hidden, and the news of it came to a good prophet, named Nathan, who felt that he must go to the king and speak to him about it.

So Nathan went to the king and told him a little story, which was this: There were two men in one

city, the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had many flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little lamb which grew up with him and his children, and drank out of his own cup, and lay in his arms and was very dear to him. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he would not take one of his own sheep to give to the stranger for dinner, but he took the poor man's lamb and killed it and gave a dinner to the man who was his guest. When David heard of this mean and cruel act he was very angry and said: "As Jehovah liveth, the man that has done this thing shall surely die, and he shall give back four lambs, because he did this thing and had no pity." Then the prophet, looking sternly and sadly at his master, the king, said: "Thou art the man." The king's eye fell, and he hung his head in shame and sorrow when he heard the words of the prophet, and said: "I have sinned against Jehovah."

One of the books of the Bible is called the Psalms. The Psalms were poems and hymns which were written by different men among the Hebrews during the course of several hundred years. Many of them were written by David. Some of these are the saddest words ever written, and show us how miserable and wretched David felt after he had done wrong. In the fifty-first Psalm, he tells of his sin and cries out to God to forgive him:

“ Wash me thoroughly,
And cleanse me from my sin.
My sin is ever before me.
Against thee, thee only have I sinned,
And done that which is evil in thy sight.
Hide thy face from my sins.
Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my
salvation.
A broken and a contrite heart,
O God, thou wilt not despise.”

More than twenty-five hundred years have passed since the penitent king in the far-off land of the Hebrews wrote these sorrowful words; and millions of sinful men and women since then, reading these words and feeling the same grief and shame that David felt, have taken comfort in knowing what David knew, that God will never despise nor turn away from any one who is truly sorry.

It is not possible for you little people to understand much about the Psalms, until you are older, and have, as we say, “more experience”; until you know more about people and things, and find how hungry and unsatisfied every soul must be until it knows God.

Most of the Psalms are not sorrowful, but are joyful and glad, and full of thanksgiving, for they were written to be sung in the temple service. It is a good plan for every one to learn some of the most beautiful Psalms by heart. Every one ought to know the twenty-third Psalm, and that other one which

begins, "God is our refuge and strength." The first of these was written by David, perhaps when he himself was a shepherd boy tending his flocks. We do not know who wrote the other, but it is one of the most beautiful ever written.

During the last part of David's life, although he was king, he was by no means happy, for he had much to trouble him. There was a great famine in the land, when the people nearly starved ; there were a great many wars, and also a terrible pestilence, a sickness from which many people died. But besides this he had trouble in his own family. One of his sons, a young man named Absalom, turned against his father, who was now old, and tried to be king in his place.

Absalom was a very handsome man and had pleasant manners, so many people liked him and joined with him against the king. David was obliged to defend himself and fight the army that his son had gathered against him. It was much harder for him than to fight against the Philistines, or the other enemies that he had fought all his life, for he could not help loving his son in spite of his being so bad.

One day David sat between the gates of the city, and the watchman on the tower saw two men come out of a forest, and run fast towards the town. They brought sad news to the king. They told him that Absalom had been riding in the thick woods on his mule, and suddenly caught his head in a great oak

tree, and was left hanging there in the branches, while the mule ran away.

David had given strict orders to his soldiers, saying, "Beware that none touch the young man Absalom"; but when they saw their enemy hanging there, and knew that he was in their power, the temptation was too much for them, and ten young men surrounded the beautiful youth as he hung helplessly before them, and killed him. Then they took his body and buried it in a great pit in the forest and put a heap of stones over it. When the king heard this terrible news, his heart was broken, and he burst into tears, and wept bitterly, and cried :

"O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom,
Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my
son!"

When the people heard how the king mourned, they no longer felt proud of their victory, but crept back into the city as if they were ashamed.

David had many children. The most famous of these was Solomon, who became king after him. David never felt happy to think that the ark of God should be kept in a tent while he himself lived in a good house, and he wanted very much to build a beautiful temple and to place the ark in it; but this was not possible for him to do, and he was obliged to leave it for his son Solomon to do after him. So when David was old, he made Solomon

king, in order that the matter should be settled before he died, and there should be no quarrelling among the brothers as to who should be the next ruler.

At last, in a good old age, King David died. Although his son and many other kings have been richer and lived in much more splendor, I do not suppose any king in any land has been so loved by his nation or has been so dear to the world as was David, who from his Psalms was called "The Sweet Singer of Israel."

The three great names of Abraham, Moses, and David stand out above all other Hebrew names like three mountain peaks that rise far above the plain and lift their snowy tops up into the blue sky.

Although they often did foolish and cruel things like the ignorant people of their time, yet they were true men who led their nation onward and upward. They had great thoughts and insights into truth which other men of their time did not have, and not only their nation, but the whole world, has been made better by them.





CHAPTER XXX.

KING SOLOMON.

SOLOMON was the third king whom the Israelites had to rule over them. When he was anointed king over his people he was only a young lad, no older than your big brother who goes to the high school. The young king had never been to school ; there were no schools for children in those days, but he must have had teachers at home who had taught him to read and write, though there were very few books written at that time, and such a thing as a newspaper was not heard of until more than two thousand years later. The young Solomon felt that he did not know much, and needed a great deal of wisdom to guide him in governing his people.

One night in a dream he thought that God came to him and told him to ask what he should give him. So Solomon answered and said : "I am as a little child among this great people, give me therefore an understanding heart to judge Thy people that I may see the difference between good and evil." Then God answered and told him that because he had asked for wisdom instead of selfishly asking that he

might live long or become very rich, wisdom should be given him, and riches and honor also.

There are many stories about the wisdom of Solomon, which show what very good judgment he had in settling all sorts of disputes.

One of them is about two women who lived together, and each had a little new-born baby. Now very little babies you know look much alike, and one night when one of them died, its mother took it and put it in the arms of the other mother who was sleeping, and took that mother's living baby for herself. When she woke in the morning she thought the dead child was not hers, and the two mothers began quarrelling as to who should have the live baby.

There were no regular judges and courts in those days, but all the people came to the king to have him settle their disputes; so these women, bringing the live baby, came to Solomon, and as each told a different story, it was hard to know which one was telling the truth. The king therefore thought that he would pretend to kill the child, for he said to himself, "The real mother will love it the most, and will cry out." So the king gave orders, saying, "Fetch me a sword and divide the living child in two, and give half to one, and half to the other." Then the woman who was the real mother, cried out, and said, "O my lord, give her the living child, and in nowise kill it," but the other said, "No, divide it"; then the king saw who was the true mother and said, "Give her the child, and on no account kill it."

The report of Solomon's wisdom spread abroad into all the neighboring countries, and he was known as the wisest man of his time. People sent riddles and questions for him to answer. The queen of Sheba came to pay him a visit and brought a great many servants with her, carrying spices, and gold, and precious stones, as a present to the king. She had heard wonderful stories of his wisdom and riches, but when she saw his splendid palace and his magnificence, and heard him answer all the hard questions which she asked him, she was overcome with surprise and said the half had not been told her.

The land of the Hebrews at last had peace after nearly four hundred years, during which there had been a great many wars. Solomon liked to live in very fine style; this was quite unlike the simple life of David, his father. He made friends with the king of Egypt and of other countries. He sent to them and bought gold, silver, brass, ivory, and wood of all kinds, oak and cedar, and the beautiful perfumed sandal-wood.

There had never been many horses in his country; the kings had ridden on mules before this, but Solomon liked horses, and bought many thousands of them. He built great stables and filled them with horses and camels and war chariots. There were no wagons nor carriages like ours in those days; the only things that went on wheels were rough carts and chariots.

He brought peacocks and monkeys and all sorts of new and foreign things into Jerusalem. He planted vineyards and built great walled places, called "reservoirs," to hold water. He had an immense family of wives and children and servants, so that every day thirty oxen and one hundred sheep were killed in order to feed them. He gave splendid dinners to his friends, and all the dishes were made of gold, for we read that silver was so plenty, it was not of much account.

All this magnificent display was very different from any thing that the Hebrews had ever seen before, and they were much pleased to see so many fine things, and to find strangers coming to their country to see their wonderful king.

Solomon wrote a great many proverbs, and he collected those of other wise men; they are put together in a book which is called Proverbs. These are not stories, or poems, or histories, like many other books of the Bible. They are little, short sentences which contain a great deal of good sense. Here are a few of them :

"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches."

"A soft answer turneth away wrath ;

But grievous words stir up anger."

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty ;

And he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city."

Solomon wrote songs and psalms and many other things besides proverbs. He also taught about

plants, flowers, animals, and birds. This was something new, for we do not read of any other Hebrew who ever did this. Of course, nowadays, we know many persons who know a great deal about flowers and the habits of animals; but in old times very few studied these matters.

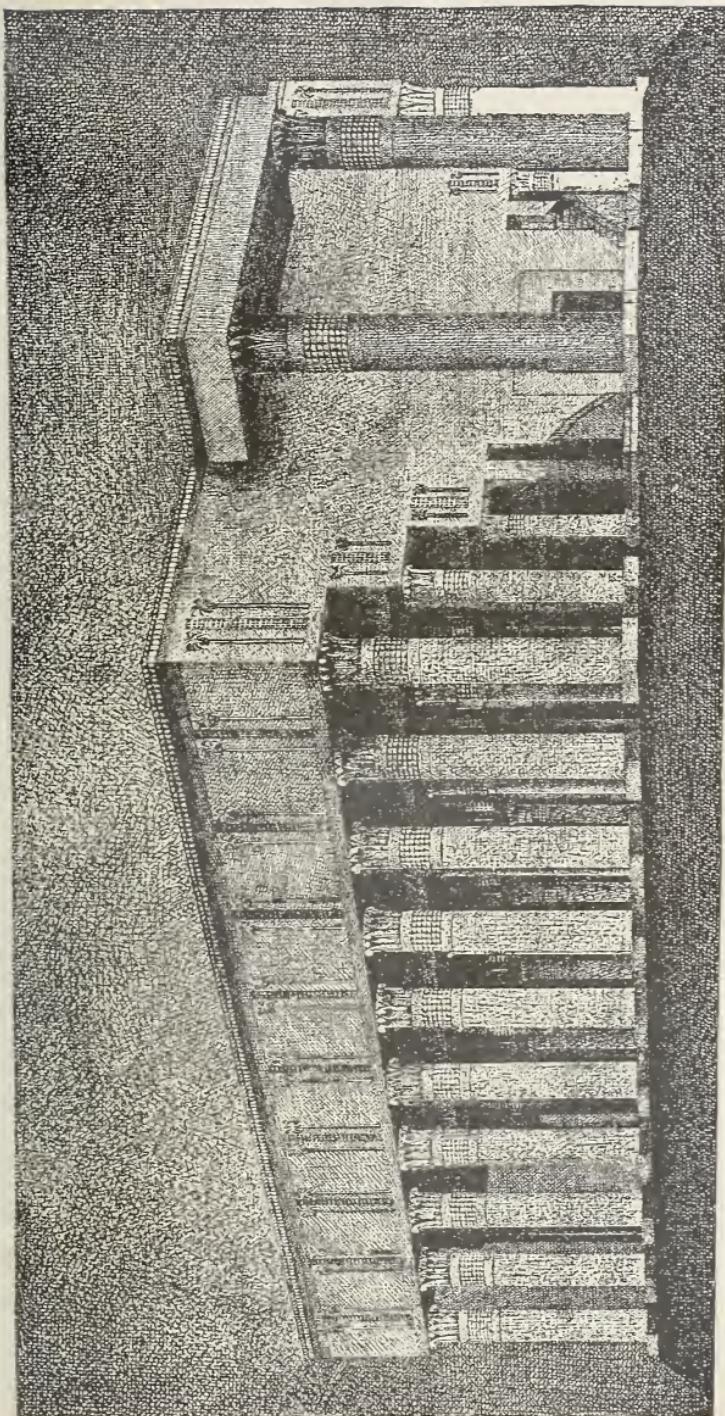
The greatest thing which King Solomon did was to carry out the wish of his father David and build a temple in which to place the ark of God. It took several years to build this, and it was the most beautiful building which the Hebrews ever had.

It was built on a hill near the walls of the city. It was made partly of stone and partly of wood, and was unlike any thing that was ever made before.

The ark, which had been kept in a tent in the city, and the other things which Moses had made, were now carried with it up into the great, beautiful temple. It was a festival day such as was never seen before nor since in Jerusalem.

Thousands and thousands of cattle and sheep were killed for the sacrifices, so that some one has written that the street ran with blood. Clouds of smoke and incense rose from the altars. Every one who could crowd into the city came to see the great processions, and join in the music and dancing and feasting, and in the praise and thanksgiving.

In the innermost part of the temple was a dark chamber like those in the Egyptian temples, only there was no figure of a god in it. The walls were overlaid with precious gold, and two figures of



SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

cherubs with outstretched wings stood, as it were, to guard the spot where the ark should be placed. Here in the darkness, in the "Holy of Holies," as it was called, the ark, after its four hundred years of wanderings, found a resting-place. It contained only the two slabs of stone on which Moses had written the Ten Commandments, but the Hebrews had such an awe and reverence for these, that they never dared come near or look at them. Only the high-priest was allowed to go within this place.

Solomon, in the presence of all the people, offered a long prayer to Jehovah, and gave this temple which he had built to Him, to be used for His worship forever. Then, for a whole week, the people offered sacrifices and feasted and rejoiced in the new life which had come to their nation and their religion, and prayed that all nations might know that Jehovah had done wonders and that He was the true God.

But Solomon, in spite of his wisdom, like many other people, did not do as well as he knew how, and married many heathen wives, who brought their heathen religion with them. To please them Solomon built temples for their idols. All this was very bad, and led to many other wrong things. So we find that the end of this great king was a disappointment and a failure. But whatever he said that was wise and true, remains wise and true, and is good for us, though the wise man who said it did not, as we often say, "practise what he preached."



CHAPTER XXXI.

THE TWO KINGDOMS.

I MUST now hurry over the events of the next few hundred years, and tell you in a few pages the main things that will interest little people like you. Almost all the books of the Bible which contain the words of the great Hebrew prophets, cannot be understood unless we know about what happened to their people during these three or four hundred years after the time of the great King Solomon.

Although the Hebrews were among the smallest and weakest of all nations, their history has probably been read and studied more than that of any other people, because it is so closely connected with those truths about God and ourselves which it is most important for us to know. If we can break through the outer shell of the history which at first seems so hard and dry, we shall find a sweet kernel within.

After the time of Solomon the different tribes of the Israelites separated from the tribe of Judah which was near Jerusalem, and was the one to which

David had belonged. There were now two kingdoms. The largest and most important was called the kingdom of Israel. It had a new king who did not descend from David. The other, which was very small indeed, was called the kingdom of Judah, and the people were called Jews, for Jew means man of Judah.

These two kingdoms kept quite separate, and did not have much to do with each other. There were very few good kings in either of them. Many of the kings and queens were half heathen, and one king in the kingdom of Judah not only worshipped idols, but even put them in the court of the temple itself, and sacrificed his own children by burning them, according to the cruel heathen custom.

Of course there were always some good people who never forgot the religion of Moses and David, and their hearts ached when they saw their beautiful temple falling into decay, and knew that the God of their fathers was no longer worshipped there.

At last a good king, named Josiah, began in Jerusalem to reign over the kingdom of Judah. He threw down the idols and began to repair the temple. One day, when the high-priest was receiving the money which the people brought to him to pay the carpenters and the builders, a great discovery was made.

A roll of parchment containing the book of the law was found, and carried to the king. What the

book was, or when it had been written, we do not know; but the reading of this book caused intense excitement. The king and the people were greatly surprised, for they had never before heard of these laws.

When the king saw what was written in the book, he tore his clothes, which was the Jewish custom when people were in great grief. He felt that Jehovah would be very angry against him and his fathers, for they had not kept this law. So he sent and called all the priests, and the prophets, and the people of Judah together, and read to them all the words of the book which he had found; and he made a promise to Jehovah to keep all the commandments that were written in it, and to serve Him with all his heart and soul.

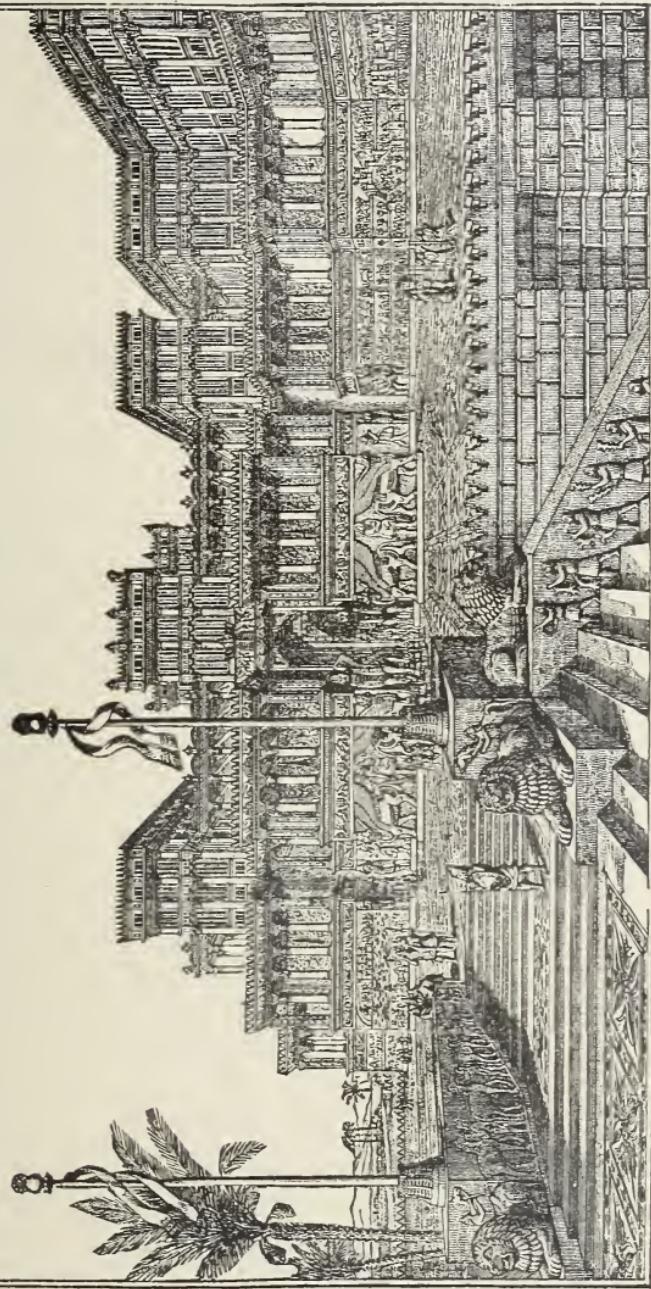
There were many heathen priests in the city who worshipped the sun, and the moon, and the stars, and burned incense to them. King Josiah drove these all away, and burned their altars and ground them into powder, and threw the dust into a brook. He destroyed the places where the people had burnt their little children as a sacrifice to their gods. He even killed the heathen priests whom he found sacrificing at their altars, and he opened the sepulchres, which were little rooms cut in the rocky sides of the hills in which the dead were buried, and took out the bones of the priests who had served idols, and burned them.

Of course it would have been much better if he had taught these poor people about the true God, instead of killing them, and certainly it was foolish to burn the bones of the dead priests, for after they were dead, it could make no difference as to what became of their bones. But in all these things Josiah did only what other good people of his time did, and in fact what many who called themselves Christians did two thousand years later.

This great change which he made was called a "Reformation"; that means a forming over again. There have been a great many reformations in the history of the world. When every thing gets very bad, and people become cruel and wicked, some wise man is sure to rise up and tell the world that God calls them to begin again and do better. We call such a man a reformer, and we must always remember Josiah as a king who was a great reformer.

The little nation of the Jews lay between two great and powerful nations, who were very different from them.

When I say *Jews* now, I mean not only the people of Judah, but all those who were called Hebrews and Israelites, for this name Jew came to be given not only to one tribe, but to all of them. One of these great nations was Egypt. Although some of the Hebrew kings had been friends with the Egyptians, yet there were a great many wars between them, and once an Egyptian king had fought



PALACE OF THE KING OF ASSYRIA, WHO FOUGHT AGAINST THE JEWS.

against the city of Jerusalem and taken away the beautiful golden shields and the treasures from Solomon's Temple.

But the people who lived over on the other side of the Hebrews were their greatest enemies. Some of these were called Assyrians and others were called Babylonians. We have learned a great deal about these nations in the last few years by digging in the ruins of their great cities. Many books have been written about them, and I will tell you more about them in another place.

The Assyrians fought against the city of Samaria, which was in the kingdom of Israel. The Israelites fought bravely for three years, but inside their walled city there was little to eat, and a great sickness came upon them. War is always a terrible thing, but in old times it was much more terrible than now. In this dreadful struggle, mothers and their little babies were thrown down the rocky cliffs and killed.

The houses were pulled down and every thing was destroyed, and the people were carried away prisoners. We do not know what finally became of most of these northern tribes of the kingdom of Israel. We speak of them now as "The ten lost tribes."

Only the kingdom of Judah was left, and years after, the great king of Babylon came and fought against Jerusalem several times. At last he destroyed this great city of David, which was so dear

to the Jews. He broke open the sepulchres and threw the dead bodies out to be eaten by the animals and birds; he set fire to the temple and the palace; he killed men, women, and children, and many whom he did not kill he carried away. This was called the Captivity, for a prisoner is a captive. The time which they spent in the country of the Babylonians to which they were taken, is called the "Exile." An exile is one who has to live in a foreign land, and is not allowed to go home. In some countries men are now exiled if it is found that they are not friendly to their own government, and it is a great punishment.





CHAPTER XXXII.

THE GREAT HEBREW PROPHETS.

THE noblest men who ever lived before the time of Christ were the great Hebrew prophets. They were all of them bold, brave men, who dared to say just what they thought was true, and to stand up alone against all the people of their time.

Nearly all these great prophets lived during the time I have just told you about—that is, between the reign of Solomon and the time when the king of Babylon carried the Jews away into exile.

During all these years, as you remember, the people in both kingdoms often worshipped idols, and sacrificed their own children, and did many other wicked and cruel things which Moses forbade them to do. Now at one time, in the larger kingdom, which you remember was called the kingdom of Israel, there was a heathen king named Ahab, who had a wife named Jezebel, a cruel, fierce woman. All the people worshipped a god called Baal, and there was only one man left among the leaders in all

the country who stood up bravely and said he would not bow his knee to Baal, but would serve Jehovah.

This was the prophet Elijah, who could not be frightened or made to do what he knew was wrong, although the wicked Queen Jezebel tried to have him killed, and sent people out to search for him. Elijah lived in a very simple way among the mountains and in the forests. His hair hung long and shaggy down his back, and a rough cloak of sheep-skin, fastened around the waist by a leather belt, was his only clothing.

At last a terrible drought came over the country; there was no rain, the grass and trees dried, and all the land became dusty and dreary. For three long, terrible years it did not rain, and finally the king himself started out and travelled over the country, to see if he could not find some place where there was still left a little green grass for his cattle. On his way he met Elijah, and he said to him: "Is that you; you, who are the troubler of Israel?" "I have not troubled Israel," said Elijah boldly. "But you and your father's family have done so, because you have forsaken the commandments of Jehovah and followed after Baal. Now go and gather all Israel and all your eight hundred and fifty prophets to meet me on the top of Mount Carmel."

It is a wonder that Ahab did not kill this bold prophet who had dared to blame him to his face, but perhaps he was afraid of him, for he sent and did what

Elijah had commanded. Then when they were all together on the mountain Elijah stood up and said : "How long halt ye between two opinions, if Jehovah be God, follow him, but if Baal follow him." But no one answered a word ; then Elijah cried : "I, even I only am left, a prophet of Jehovah." So he told the people to build an altar, and after doing this they killed a sacrifice and laid it on the altar, then all day, even until night, the people cried : "O Baal hear us." When their gods did not answer them, they cried yet louder, and at last in their fury, cut themselves with knives till they were covered with blood. After they had cried all day and no answer had come, Elijah, too, built an altar and called upon Jehovah to send fire to burn his sacrifice ; and answer came, the fire fell like lightning from the sky, and all the people, when they saw it, covered their faces, and cried : "Jehovah, he is God." And after that the sky grew black with clouds and a great rain came and watered the thirsty land.

Then Elijah had no mercy on the false prophets and killed them all. The queen was very angry at this, and would have killed Elijah, but he ran away and hid in the forest. As he lay under a tree, his heart was very sad and he prayed that he might die, and said : "It is enough ; now, O Jehovah, take away my life." And he went into a cave, and the voice of Jehovah said to him, "Go forth and stand on the mountain before Jehovah. And be-

hold Jehovah passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before Jehovah ; but Jehovah was not in the wind ; and after the wind, an earthquake ; but Jehovah was not in the earthquake ; and after the earthquake a fire ; but Jehovah was not in the fire ; and after the fire a still, small voice." And in this still, small voice, the voice of conscience, God spoke, as he always speaks to those whose minds are fully open to receive His words.

I have not time to tell you all the stories which are written of this brave old man, and of his disciple, the prophet Elisha. But the account of Elijah's death is one of the most beautiful of all the Hebrew stories, and shows how much the writer loved and reverenced him.

This is what it says : The prophet felt that Jehovah was about to call him away from earth, and he wandered off beyond the river Jordan ; he meant to go alone, but Elisha loved him dearly, and would not let him go without a friend, and so he sadly followed the dear master, whom he felt he was soon to lose. As they went on their way, the old prophet said to the younger : " Ask what I shall do for thee before I be taken from thee." And Elisha said : " I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." And he said : " Thou hast asked a hard thing, but if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so." " And it came to pass as they still went on and talked,

behold, there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire which parted them asunder, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried: 'My father, my father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof !'

A famous musician named Mendelssohn has written a great oratorio about this grand old Hebrew prophet, and I hope you will some time hear it sung.

All through those dreadful years, when in both the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah, there were wicked, cruel kings, and the people forgot the religion of their fathers and worshipped idols or prayed to the moon and stars, there were wise, far-seeing men, who told them of their sins and warned them of the great troubles that would come upon them, if they did not give up their wickedness. The words which these prophets spoke are written in little books, and put together at the end of the Old Testament. We do not know who wrote all of them, or in fact most of the books which I have spoken of, sometimes they were written by the prophets themselves, and sometimes by friends who remembered what they had said.

Some of the prophets lived in the city, and their writings give us a little idea of the things they were in the habit of seeing there. This is shown by their language, which is full of references to chariots, and horses, and soldiers, to priests and sacrifices, to kings and palaces, to city walls and flat-roofed houses,

to the bracelets, and rings, and other ornaments which the women wore, and to the glory and beauty of the temple.

Others of the prophets lived in the country ; they watched their sheep, or trimmed their vines, and gathered figs and olives. In their writings we read about the threshing-floors, where they often saw the grain threshed ; of the locusts and mildew which spoiled their crops ; of those great trees, the cedars of Lebanon, which grew on their mountains. They speak of sheep and goats, and of the lions and wild animals which sometimes came from their dens, in the rocky clefts of the mountains, down into the valleys.

We know very little about the lives of these prophets : they never say much about themselves, for their hearts are full of the message which they feel they must tell to the unbelieving men around them. Amidst all the drunkenness and cruelty and wickedness of their time, these men spoke their brave warnings, and told the people that Jehovah cared not so much to have them offer burnt offerings and sacrifices as to have them love truth and justice.

These true-hearted, clear-eyed men were disgusted with the Jews, who foolishly imagined that God could be pleased with any outward thing which they did, while they themselves were mean and selfish in their hearts. One of them, a shepherd named Amos, said : “It is an evil time. Seek good and not evil,

that ye may live." And then he says, as if speaking for Jehovah: "I hate, I despise your feasts and your solemn assemblies, but let righteousness roll down as a mighty stream." Another, named Micah, spoke these words, among the noblest ever uttered by any of the prophets: "What doth Jehovah require of thee but to do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?" This seems very simple to us, and we can hardly imagine how strange such words must have seemed to those people who knew so little about God. They thought of Him as a great king, and they supposed the way to please Him was to offer Him sacrifices, as one would give presents to a real king.

The book of Isaiah, which was written at different times by two men, is perhaps the most important of all the writings of the prophets. It contains a great deal of very sublime poetry and prophecy, and the men who wrote the books of the New Testament often quote from it.

For hundreds of years the Jews looked forward to the coming of some great leader and saviour, whom they thought would be the "Messiah," which means the "Anointed One." They did not know very much about it, but many of their prophets, especially the unknown man who wrote the last part of the book called Isaiah, tell of some one who was to come. When at last Jesus came to save the people from their sins, and to teach them the way to God,

some of the Jews, who believed in Jesus, saw in Him the Messiah, and loved to read the verses which Isaiah had written so many hundred years before, and which seemed to them to describe Jesus as they knew him.

There were a great many prophets. The words of some of them have come down to us, but many were doubtless lost and forgotten. Some of them had long, hard names, which you would not remember if I should tell you. The names of two of them are Daniel and Jonah, which I think you have heard before, and will remember.

The only other one of whom I shall tell you was the prophet Jeremiah, who lived in Jerusalem at the time when the king of Babylon came and fought against the city. Unlike most of the prophets, he was a priest. But the other priests and the many false prophets hated him. He stood alone among his people; and as he told them of the evils which were coming on them, there was no one to believe him or to stand by him. He was a mournful prophet, for it broke his heart to see the misery that was coming upon his dear city. He cried: "O that I could comfort myself against sorrow! My heart is faint within me. O that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears that I might weep day and night!"

His bold words made him so many enemies, that he was beaten and thrown into prison, and was in danger of his life. Once he was put down into a

damp, slimy well, where he sank deep into the mud, and would have died if a friend had not persuaded the king to let him be lifted out.

But at last, after the city had fallen, and the poor captive Jews were carried away into exile, after they had nearly starved to death inside the city walls, Jeremiah was taken out of prison and carried in chains with the others. But, strange to say, he was soon set free and allowed to go where he pleased. He longed for his dear city, although it was in ruins, and so he turned back to live with those who had been left behind among its broken walls.

In spite of his sorrow, when the worst which he had expected had really come, his words show us that, like a true prophet, he could see beyond the misery and suffering around him and have faith in his God.

“Jehovah will not cast me off forever,” he said.

“For though he causes grief, yet will he have compassion.

“For he doth not willingly grieve the children of men.”

You will never find among the writings of the Greeks or of those of any other religion such patient, trustful words as these of the old Hebrew prophet.



CHAPTER XXXIII.

BABYLON.

OF all the wonderful, rich cities which have ever been built since the world began, the city of Babylon, according to all accounts, must have been one of the largest, richest, and most wonderful.

Like the great cities of Egypt, it was built on a level plain on either side of a broad river, and around it, as far as the eye could see, were rich fields of golden grain, and orchards, and groves of green trees. Travellers who visited Babylon in ancient times tell us that the city was at least forty miles around, and inside its walls were great fields and parks and fine, straight streets, and houses three or four stories high. Around all the city was a thick wall wide enough for horses and chariots to drive abreast on its top, and higher than Bunker Hill monument, which all the Boston boys and girls have seen, and higher than the goddess of Liberty in New York harbor, which of course my little friends in New York know about.

Near the city were beds of clay from which bricks were made, and the whole city was built of brick

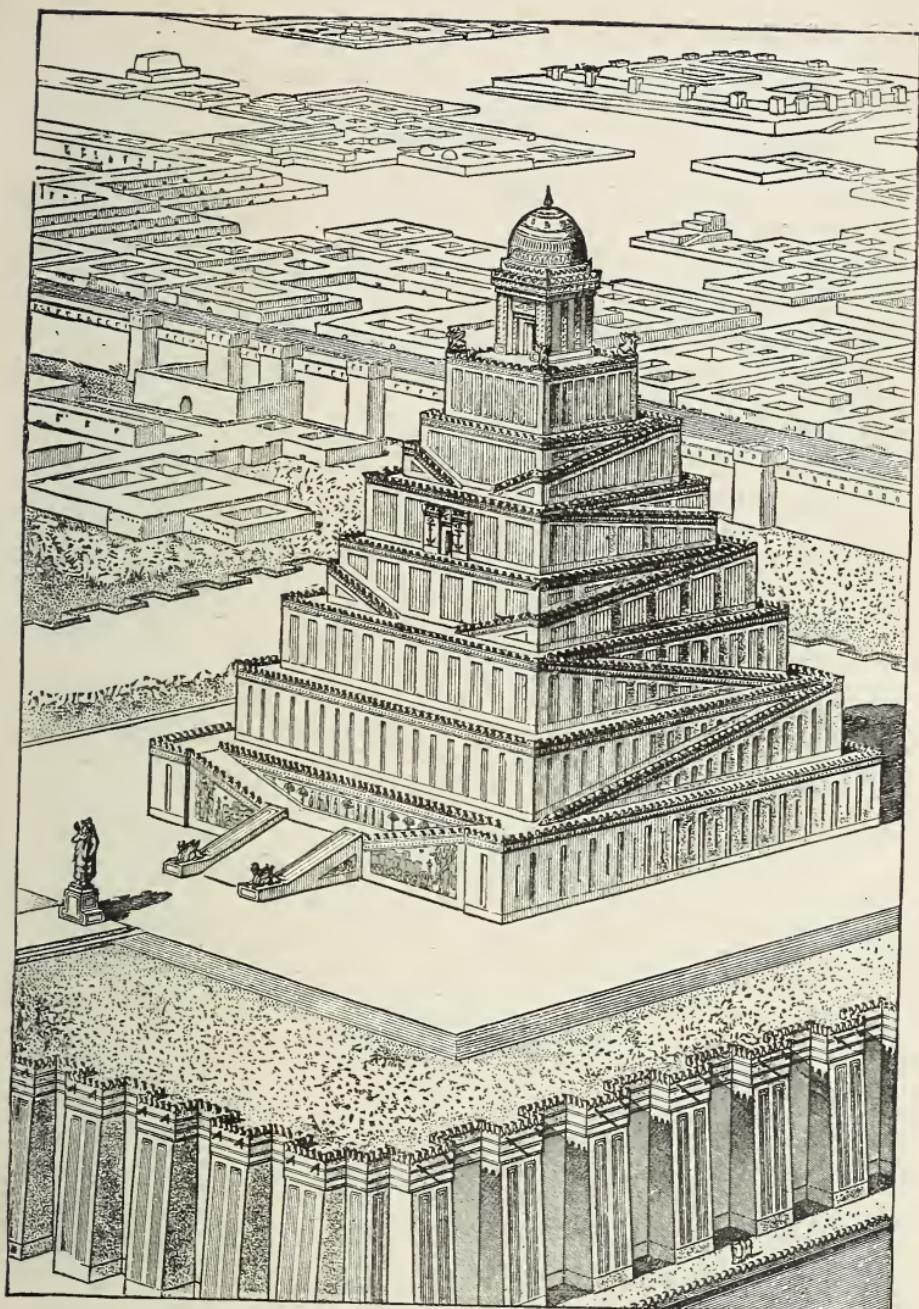
and plaster. The houses were often painted in bright colors, red, yellow, and blue, and must have looked very gay indeed.

The temples and the palaces and the queen's gardens, were the most astonishing things in this very wonderful city.

I told you how the people of Egypt liked to build huge stone temples and lofty pyramids that rose hundreds of feet in the air. In many ways the people in Babylon were like those in Egypt. They, too, liked immense temples and palaces, and liked to build every thing in a large, strong way, so that it would seem as if it must last forever.

The greatest temple of all was that of the god Bel. This rose up high from the level plain, hundreds of feet towards the blue sky, and winding round and round it was a road which led up to the top. From there one could view, not the yellow sands of the desert, which one sees from the top of the Great Pyramid, but miles and miles of yellow grain, and bright flowers and green grass. And beneath lay the great city in all its splendor.

On one side was the palace of the kings, which was seven miles around; and there also were the famous "Hanging Gardens," which the king had built to please his queen. These gardens were the wonder of the world; they were built one above another at an immense expense, and must have been very strange and beautiful.



TEMPLE.

From the top of this great temple of Bel one could also see many canals, some large and some small, which carried the water from the river all through the parks, and the gardens, and the fields, so that there should be plenty of water when there was no rain.

These great walls and temples and palaces could not have been built if there had not been many slaves, and if the king had not been, like most kings in those days, a great tyrant, who always had his own way, and forced the people to give money and work to carry out his extravagant wishes, just as the kings in Egypt did.

All the people in this city and the country round about worshipped the Sun god or some other god. They studied the movements of the sun and the moon and the stars and knew more about them than any people of their time. Many of them thought they could tell what would happen in the future by studying the positions of the stars. This foolish notion was held for thousands of years and there are still some persons silly enough to believe such things.

If you had walked along the streets of Babylon and looked at the ladies and gentlemen who lived there in that far-off time of which I am telling, you would have seen strange sights.

The men and women dressed very much alike, and you would have noticed that nearly every

man wore long hair and carried a walking stick with a carved handle, and also always had a seal made of some hard stone on which small figures were carved.

If you had gone into one of the houses of the poor you would have found that they had but little to eat and drink besides dates and goats' milk,



PILING HEADS OF CAPTIVES.

(From an ancient picture.)

though they sometimes had cucumbers and melons also. In a rich man's house you would have found a great many kinds of fruit, fish, meat, and costly wine, of which too much was generally drunk.

If you were invited to dinner there you would have seen a great display of gold and silver dishes and smelled rich perfumes, and heard music from very queer instruments, such as we never see now.

You would have found the people busy, wide-awake, and intelligent, but often fierce and cruel to their enemies and captives. They were extremely religious, after their fashion ; they had many gods and temples and ceremonies, and their priests were rich and powerful.

The king of Babylon left the poorest of the Jews at Jerusalem and took away with him only the richest and most important of them.

They were taken across the plains far to the east, and after many days came in sight of this magnificent city, so different from the city of David, whose ruined walls they had left behind them on its rocky hill-top. They must have looked with wonder and dread upon the mighty king who ruled such a city, and upon his great army of soldiers with their shining spears and helmets, their battle-axes, bows and arrows, and chariots drawn by swift horses.

They saw the generals and judges, the king's counsellors, and the governors of the different divisions of the country who served under the king, and every thing must have seemed terrible to them as they realized that they were far from home and captives in a land where their God was not known and they were despised.





CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE JEWS IN BABYLON, AND THEIR RETURN.

THE Jews remained in Babylon about sixty years.

In all that long time they did not forget their religion, or their native land, and they taught their little children who were born during this time to love and serve the God of their fathers.

They learned the language spoken by the people of Babylon, and many of the new words were adopted into their own Hebrew tongue. It was in fact very much changed, so that the language of the common people was quite different, when they returned to Jerusalem, from what it was when they left it as captives. They learned many other things which they never would have known if they had remained in their little kingdom of Judah, and some of these things were an advantage to them.

Some of the Jews, probably fearing that the histories and stories of their kings and people might be lost and forgotten, now began to write them down. The Book of the Kings, which begins with Solomon, who lived about five hundred years before this, tells

about the history of the kings down to the Captivity, and was written at this time by some man whose name we do not know.

The most famous of all the captive Jews was a man named Daniel, who, as we read, was good, and wise, and handsome. Moses had given the Jews strict commands about what they were not to eat, and although Daniel received the favor of the king and had wine and meat provided by him, yet for fear that he should eat something which was forbidden, he refused it all, and ate nothing but simple porridge or beans and peas, and drank water.

One of the books of the Old Testament is called the Book of Daniel. We do not know who wrote it; probably it was not all written at once, and much of it not until a long time after Daniel lived. It is a very curious book and is hard to understand, so I shall not trouble your little heads about it. It contains, however, two or three very beautiful stories about Daniel, which you will like to know.

We read that the king was greatly pleased with the young man, because he had told him the meaning of a dream, and it says: "Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon." The other officers did not like to have a man from a foreign land set over them, so they laid a plan to bring him into disgrace. They knew that every day he kneeled three times before his window which

looked towards Jerusalem, and prayed to his God. So they begged the king to throw into the den of lions any man who for forty days should ask any thing of either a god or man except of the king alone.

They very well knew that a brave, true man like Daniel, would not obey any law which he knew to be wrong; and so, as they had expected, he knelt and prayed as usual. Then these wicked men gladly hurried to the king to tell him about it. He had not imagined when he made this law that it was going to injure Daniel, and he felt terribly at the thought of throwing him to the fierce lions.

But he did not dare to break his promise, and the account says: "Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, 'Thy God will deliver thee,' and a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den. Then the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; neither were instruments of music brought before him; and his sleep fled from him. Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions, and cried: 'O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God whom thou servest able to deliver thee from the lions?' Then said Daniel: 'My God hath shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me.' Then the king was glad, and commanded that they should take Daniel up

out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he trusted in his God."

Among the most wonderful people in ancient times, were the Persians, who lived east of the city of Babylon, and who came with many horses and a great army to fight against the people of this great walled city.

These Persians had a religion which was much more like that of the Jews, than any other religion of that time.

They believed in one great, good spirit, and one great, bad spirit, who made all things, good and bad, and who were just as unlike each other as darkness and light.

These Persians hated idols even more than the Jews did, and never had temples or altars. They were wonderfully fine soldiers, and could ride on horseback and shoot with their arrows better than any other people, I suppose. The best thing about them was, that they always spoke the truth, and despised a lie above all things.

One night, when the king of Babylon had a great feast, he sent to the heathen temple and had all the gold and silver dishes and cups brought, which he had taken from the Jews' temple at Jerusalem. The king and his wives and lords, and the great company which he had invited, drank wine out of them, and had a great deal of wicked and foolish

carousing. They were not at all afraid of the strong Persian army camping outside their walls. We read that suddenly as the king sat feasting he saw a hand writing mysterious words upon the wall of his palace. He was greatly troubled, for he did not know what they meant. He called the wise men to explain it, but none of them except Daniel could tell what the strange words meant, for they were written in the Hebrew language.

He told the king that they said this: "God hath numbered thy kingdom and brought it to an end; thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting; thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

That very night, while all the people were gayly feasting, and the guard had forgotten to watch the great gates of the river which ran through the city, the Persians, outside the walls, had laid a shrewd plan to enter it. They dug deep ditches, and turned aside the course of the river so that the water sank lower and lower in the river's bed, and at last they crept under the gates and surprised the city.

Then a fearful night of bloodshed followed; people ran wildly about in the darkness and were struck down and killed by the Persian soldiers; the king was slain, and Babylon, the great city of which he had been so proud, fell into the hands of the strangers.

The Hebrew prophets had before this told that

Babylon would be completely destroyed and wiped out from the face of the earth. They expected that this would come soon, but it did not come at once. It was sixteen hundred years before the city entirely disappeared, and the plain that had once been so beautiful and green had turned into a desert, in which only the wild beasts lived.

Although the glory of Babylon had departed, and its high walls were broken down, it still remained for a long time a great city.

The new Persian king was named Cyrus. He took pity on the poor Jewish captives who longed for their dear Jerusalem, and he allowed them to take all the precious treasures which had been brought from the temple, and to set out for the land of their fathers, which none of the younger ones had ever seen.

It was a company of about fifty thousand people who set forth on the tiresome journey across the plains westward. They had to go slowly on their camels and horses, and it was four months before the rocky hills and green valleys of their own land met their eager eyes.

This land where their fathers' God had been served, seemed so dear and sacred to them that they now began to call it the "Holy Land," and Jerusalem the "Holy City," and for many years the name Jerusalem was almost forgotten.



CHAPTER XXXV.

THE JEWS UNDER THEIR MASTERS.

UNTIL the time when the Jews had been carried away captive to Babylon, they had always governed themselves. For nearly nine hundred years they had not had any other nation to rule over them, but now they were never again to be a free people. First under the Persians, and then under the Greeks and Romans, for over five hundred years they had rulers who spoke a foreign language, who made them pay taxes, and who treated them sometimes cruelly and sometimes kindly.

The Persian rulers did not interfere much with their religion, and let them do as they pleased about most things.

The first thought in the minds of devout Jews was to rebuild the Temple. The first Temple, which had been built by Solomon about five hundred years before, had been almost entirely destroyed, so they began again. They cut down the great cedars of Lebanon, and sent for skilful workmen, and all were busy, either working themselves, or earning money to pay for the cost of the new

building. It was larger, but not so rich and splendid as Solomon's Temple, although its doors were overlaid with gold.

When it was quite done, there was a great festival, and such rejoicing as the sad-hearted Jews had not known for many years.

Some of the Jews had remained in Babylon. Among these was a wise man, named Ezra, who was a scribe, that is, a man whose business it is to study the law of Moses and to write.

He knew that the Temple had been built again, and he longed to go and teach his people of the law; for the greatest of the prophets were dead, and the people had few leaders and teachers.

The king of Persia was very kind to him, and not only allowed him to go, but let him take with him all other Jews who wished to go, and he also gave him a great deal of gold and silver to use for the Temple.

Probably Ezra had never seen Jerusalem before, but he had dreamed of it all his life, and his heart must have beat fast when on the journey the broken walls and the new Temple of the Holy City were first caught sight of, far off on the western hills.

Ezra, who had carefully studied the law which he brought with him from Babylon, was much stricter than the Jews who lived at Jerusalem.

Some of them had married heathen wives; just as

David and Solomon had done before them, and had not thought it wrong.

After Ezra had been in Jerusalem a few days, he was told of this, and he was so shocked and frightened, that he rent his mantle and tore his hair in his horror at what he thought God would consider a terrible sin. All day long he sat in the Temple speechless with grief.

At evening time, when the people assembled for the sacrifice, throwing himself on his knees, he wept and prayed that God would have mercy on them. They were so impressed with Ezra's earnestness, and so afraid they had done wrong, that all those who had married wives of other nations put them and their children away. This seems to us very unkind and unnecessary, but they thought they were doing right.

Besides Ezra, another great leader now appeared. His name was Nehemiah. He was a cup-bearer at the palace of the Persian king, far from Jerusalem. He often thought of the Holy City, and of its ruined walls, and longed to go and rebuild them, and thus make the city secure against its enemies. One day, as he handed the cup of wine to the king, as was his custom, the king noticed how sad he looked, and asked the reason. Then Nehemiah told him how he was mourning for the city of his fathers, and how he wept as he thought of its broken walls and gates which had been burned.

The king, taking pity on his servant, asked him what he would like to do. Nehemiah was almost afraid to tell, but took courage and spoke out bravely, and told him what he would like. Then the king decided to send him, and gave him letters to people who would help him, and sent a company of horsemen to conduct him on his way.

After he had come to Jerusalem, one night, Nehemiah took a few friends and quietly went, under cover of the darkness, around the city, to see the broken walls and to plan just what he should do.

When those around Jerusalem who belonged to other nations, learned what he had planned to do, they were much vexed, and tried to put a stop to it. So Nehemiah had to work carefully and keep a guard all the time. Every man who was building had his sword fastened to his sash, and the trumpeter stood ready to sound the alarm if their enemies should attack them. So anxious was Nehemiah to have the work go on, that neither he nor his servants and guard took off their clothes night nor day.

Sometimes he was in great danger of being killed; but he would not seek a safe place and stayed bravely at his post.

At last the great work was finished, and for the first time since the city had fallen, more than one hundred years before, it was again strong and secure.

Ezra, the old scribe, of whom we have just now

read, did not help to build the walls ; he was busy studying the law. Few of the people could read or understand the law, and he felt that he must do what he could to make it plain to those who knew so little about it. So one morning, as the sun was rising, a multitude gathered to hear him, and he stood up outdoors, in a great wooden pulpit, and unfolded the long roll of parchment which he had probably brought from Babylon. Then while all the people stood and eagerly listened, he read and explained to them the laws which were supposed to have been written by Moses, but which had perhaps never been fully known, and certainly never kept, during the many hundreds of years since his time.

The Jews had always thought a great deal about the Temple and the offerings and the sacrifices, but they had not thought much or known much about this law, and gathering together to hear it read, was a strange and new thing to them.

They now began to be more strict. In the next four hundred and fifty years, we find there were few great prophets, and few men who were not bound closely to the "letter of the law." They became very careful and particular about all sorts of little, unimportant things as to the ways of sacrificing animals in the Temple, and about eating and drinking and dressing according to certain rules. They also began to be a great deal more strict than they had ever been before, in keeping one year in seven as a year

of rest, and in keeping the Sabbath day. They felt so very strongly about this, that several times when they knew their enemies were going to attack them on the Sabbath day, they chose to be defeated rather than to defend themselves. Many times they suffered terribly on account of this.

Many of them also began to feel it was not quite right to dare to speak the name of their God, Jehovah, and so it came about that they spoke of it with great fear and trembling and called it "The Name." Only the high-priest was allowed to say "Jehovah," and even he sometimes only in a whisper.

In the early Old Testament stories, we find that the Jews sometimes believed in other gods as well as Jehovah, and thought of Him, not as the only God, but simply as greater than the gods of other nations. We find that by this time they had come to a very firm, clear belief in Jehovah alone. They no longer believed in heathen gods, but they believed in good and bad spirits, angels and devils.

After some time they were no longer under the control of the Persians, but of another nation called the Greeks.

It was during this time that the Jews suffered greatly and many of them were cruelly put to death because they would not give up their religious ideas and customs. We read that an aged scribe, ninety years old, who refused to swallow a piece of pork

which was put into his mouth, was tortured until he died a painful death.

The Temple was polluted, that is, made vile and unclean in the eyes of the Jews, and many copies of the books of the Law were burnt. Although the Jews were cruelly persecuted during part of the time that they were ruled by the Greeks, yet in many ways it was a great advantage to them to become acquainted with this remarkable people from Greece. Many Jews learned the Greek language, which was much finer than the Hebrew tongue, and contained the most valuable literature of any in the ancient world.

A famous Greek general named Alexander, of whom we shall soon hear more, had built a great city in Egypt named Alexandria, after himself.

A colony of Jews lived here, and during this time, some of their most learned men translated the Hebrew Scriptures, which we call the Old Testament, into the Greek language. At first, some of the Jews at Jerusalem felt it was wrong to have their sacred books written in any other than the Hebrew tongue; but after a while the Greek translation came into general use, and at the time when Jesus lived, nearly all the people read the Law and the Prophets, and the Psalms, in the Greek language.

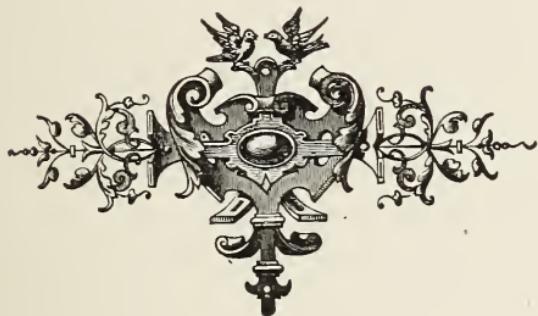
One hundred and sixty years before the time of Christ, another great nation, called the Romans,

ruled over the Jews. One of their great generals, named Pompey, came to Jerusalem, and to the great horror of the pious Jews, entered into the Temple, and went straight into the most sacred place of all, the Holy of Holies, where only the high-priest was ever allowed to go. This Roman general was curious to see what he would find. He had often wondered what this mysterious God of the Jews was like, and probably expected to find some image of Him in this most sacred place.

He was greatly astonished when, on lifting the curtain, neither statue, nor picture, nor likeness of any God met his eyes. It seemed a strange thing to him to find a temple, a priesthood, and a law, but no God who could be seen by mortal eyes.

A short time before Jesus was born, a Roman, named Herod, who was then king of the Jews, rebuilt the Temple, which had become partly destroyed. It was built of snow-white marble, with golden spikes and pinnacles, which reflected the rays of the rising and setting sun. There were many courts and great galleries, with long rows of marble pillars, and the great gates of the Temple covered with gold, or silver, or bronze, were so large that at night, when they were carefully closed, it took the strength of many men to roll them together, and fasten them with heavy bolts and bars. This was the third Temple which the Jews had in the thousand years which had passed since the time of King David.

And with this building of the Temple we will close this story of the Jews, for now we begin upon a new time, when the coming of Jesus and the beginning of the Christian religion was to make a vast change in the thoughts of men, and alter the history of the whole world.





CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE GREEKS.

THE land of Greece was different from either the country of the Egyptians, or that of the Babylonians. It had no broad, level plains, or deserts, or great rivers.

It was much more like the country of the Jews, which had high, snow-capped mountains, and green valleys, and little rivers and brooks.

Unlike the country of the Jews, however, it was three fourths surrounded by the sea, and as it had many fine harbors, the people built ships, and travelled, and carried on a great deal of business by means of them.

The Greeks were, in most respects, the handsomest, the wisest, and the most interesting of all the nations of the old world. Few people now study the languages of the Persians, or Egyptians, or Jews, but almost every young person who goes to college is sure to study the Greek language and the history of the Greeks. One can hardly go into an Art Museum, or even into a house where people live

who care for beautiful things, without seeing some picture or plaster copy of one of the beautiful Greek statues, or some vase or ornament made after the design of an artist who lived more than two thousand years ago in this land of Greece.

The Egyptians and the people of Babylon and Persia liked to build temples, and carve statues, which were very large and strong, but they rarely made any thing which was beautiful ; neither did the Jews, who never made statues nor cared much for making any thing, except their Temple, beautiful to the eye.

The Greeks, however, loved beauty in every thing. They cared a great deal for making their language, their poetry, their cities and temples, and their bodies beautiful. Compared with most other nations, they were a free, happy people, with milder manners and laws than were elsewhere known.

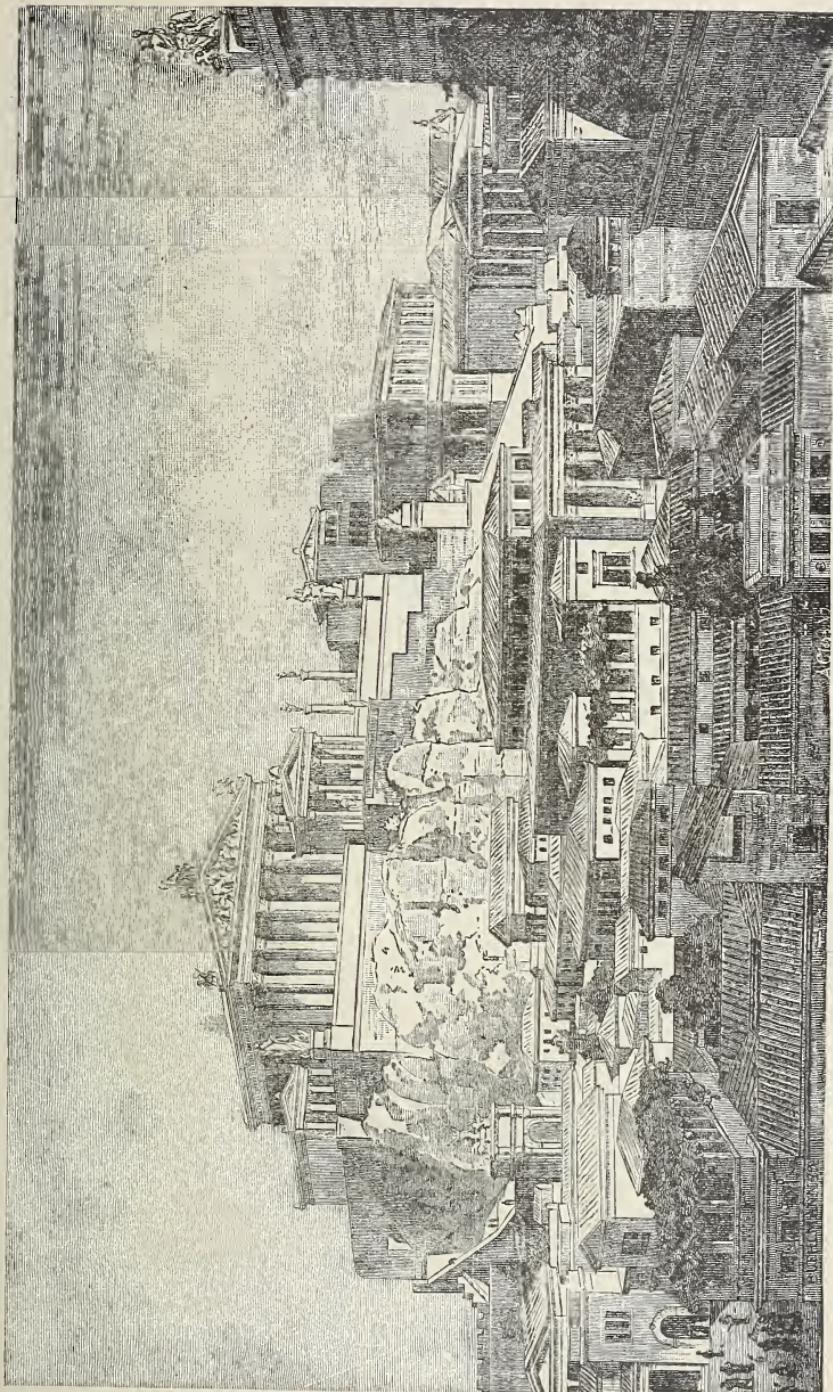
Of all ancient peoples, they alone had a great literature. The Jews, of course, had their sacred writings, but, aside from these, they had nothing like the poems and plays, and the books on science and philosophy, which we find among the Greeks.

The greatest poet among the Greeks was a man named Homer, who lived, it is supposed, not long after the time of Solomon, that is, about one thousand years before Christ. He wrote a long poem about a war between the Greeks and the people of a great walled city, called Troy, or Ilium. This was called

the Trojan war, and the poem of Homer's was called the *Iliad*.

He wrote another book also, called the *Odyssey*, which gives an account of the voyages and adventures on land and sea of Ulysses, sometimes called Odysseus, a famous hero, who fought in the Trojan war. These great poems became a sort of Bible to the Greeks; they sang and read and studied them, and were never tired of hearing about the gods and goddesses, and the brave heroes and beautiful women of whom Homer wrote. They themselves were often helped to do brave and noble deeds by remembering those of past ages.

The Greeks, for a long time, had no very clear ideas about God, or about right and wrong as we understand them. Like all other nations of that time, they did not think it wrong to keep slaves, and to do many cruel things to their enemies. Most of them thought the worst thing which a man could do was to be cowardly, or to leave the bodies of his friends unburied after their death. They believed in a great many gods and goddesses, some of whose names perhaps you already know. The most important are known to us by the names of Juno, Venus, Mars, Neptune, and Apollo. These all had their home on the top of a high mountain called Olympus, where lived the greatest god of all, named Jupiter. They thought of these gods as being very much like themselves, only far more powerful, and able to go



instantly from one place to another. They built beautiful marble temples to these gods and goddesses, and placed wonderful statues in them which were sometimes covered with gold.

They had no such priesthood as the Egyptians and Persians and Jews had, and there were no regular bloody sacrifices such as the Jews always had in their Temple.

Like all people of that time, the Greeks were superstitious, and believed in signs, just as some foolish people nowadays believe that Friday is a bad day on which to begin a journey, or that if thirteen people sit down to a table one will die before the end of the year. When the Greeks were in doubt what to do, they sometimes killed birds or animals and cut them open, and were guided by the marks which they found within. Sometimes they went to the place where a god was supposed to speak through a voice called the "oracle."

Once the oracle is reported to have told who was the wisest man among the Greeks. It said this man was Socrates, and truly the oracle was right. Socrates was one of the noblest and most remarkable men who ever lived, and is therefore one of the three great men, among all the hundreds of famous Greeks, whom I have selected to tell you about. I have spoken of Homer, the great poet, who lived five or six hundred years before Socrates. Many famous poets and soldiers and artists lived between the time

of Homer and Socrates, and I hope you will learn a great deal about them when you are older, but we have not time to speak of them now.

Socrates lived in Athens, the most important city in Greece, at the same time that Nehemiah, the Jew, came back from the Persian king and built the walls around Jerusalem. Probably these two men never heard of each other, for, although their countries were not far apart, the Jews and Greeks had very little to do with each other until the time of Alexander, who is the third man of whom I shall tell you.

Although the oracle said no one was wiser than Socrates, yet he was modest and did not think himself wise, except that he knew enough to know his own ignorance, which he found was more than most people knew of themselves. He went about the streets, in the temples, and the market places, and groves, talking to every one who would hear him. One of his friends named Plato, who followed and listened to him, wrote down many of the dialogues which Socrates held with all kinds of people.

Socrates always began by asking questions, and he was promptly answered by the thoughtless ones who felt quite positive they were right, and who sometimes thought his questions rather queer and stupid. Socrates did not contradict them; he modestly went on asking questions, but in such a way that they soon began to see they had not looked on all sides of the subject, and there were many more things than

they had ever imagined to be considered, before a right answer could be given.

They came to see that many things which they had taken for granted, were only half true or not true at all. Socrates' shrewd questions set people to thinking as they had never thought before. They could not but respect him, for he was poor and simple, made no pretence, and was always seeking after wisdom. His questions were generally as to what was just or unjust, what was religious, what was true and false.

At last many people began to suspect that he did not believe much in the gods, and was teaching bad things to young men ; so it was finally judged that he was worthy of death, as he would not promise to do any differently. While he was in prison, his friends came to him, and though they shed bitter tears, yet he was cheerful and brave, and comforted them, and talked about the hope of a future life.

At last when Socrates was made to drink the poison which was to end his life, he said to his friends who stood around him weeping: "The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways—I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows."

Even in the writings of the Jews, we find few men who had a greater love of truth, or were more brave and noble in life and death, than the noble Socrates. Although it is more than two thousand years since

he died, the wisest men still study his words in order to learn wisdom.

For many hundred years Greece, although a small country, was divided into smaller parts, and each part governed itself, and there was no great king who ruled over all the Greeks.

Finally, however, the different parts of Greece were united under one famous man called Alexander the Great.

He gathered an army, and set out from Greece with his finely trained soldiers. He went east and south and overcame every army which he met, no matter how large it was nor how small his own might be. He went to Egypt and built the great city of Alexandria of which I told you and he passed beyond the country of the Jews over east, to the great city of the Persians, which yielded to him.

Probably never before nor since was there so great a conqueror. When he was only twenty-five years old he was master of many nations. Everywhere that he went he carried the language and ideas and customs of the Greeks. In many respects, the Greeks, coming from the newer world of the west, had higher ideas than the people of these eastern nations. They had better ideas of women, and believed that each man should have only one wife.

It was at this time, when the countries ruled by the Persians came under the control of Alexander, that the Jews suffered a great deal on account of

their religion, for the different Greek rulers cared nothing for the Temple of the Jews, and set up temples and images of their own gods.

Yet, in spite of this it was, in the end, probably a very good thing for the Jews, who had lived a rather narrow life, shut in among themselves, to get acquainted with this wonderful nation of the Greeks.





CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE ROMANS.

OVER the blue sea, west of Greece, in a long, narrow country, almost surrounded by water, was a great and famous city named Rome. Rome was built before Socrates lived, or the Jews had been carried away to Babylon. At first it was only a little city on the banks of the river Tiber, but afterwards it became one of the greatest and most splendid cities which was ever built; and now, after more than twenty-five hundred years, although it is much smaller and not so beautiful, it is perhaps the most interesting city in the whole world. It would take a whole library full of books to tell you all the interesting and important things which are known about this wonderful city, and the brave, stern Romans who made it so famous.

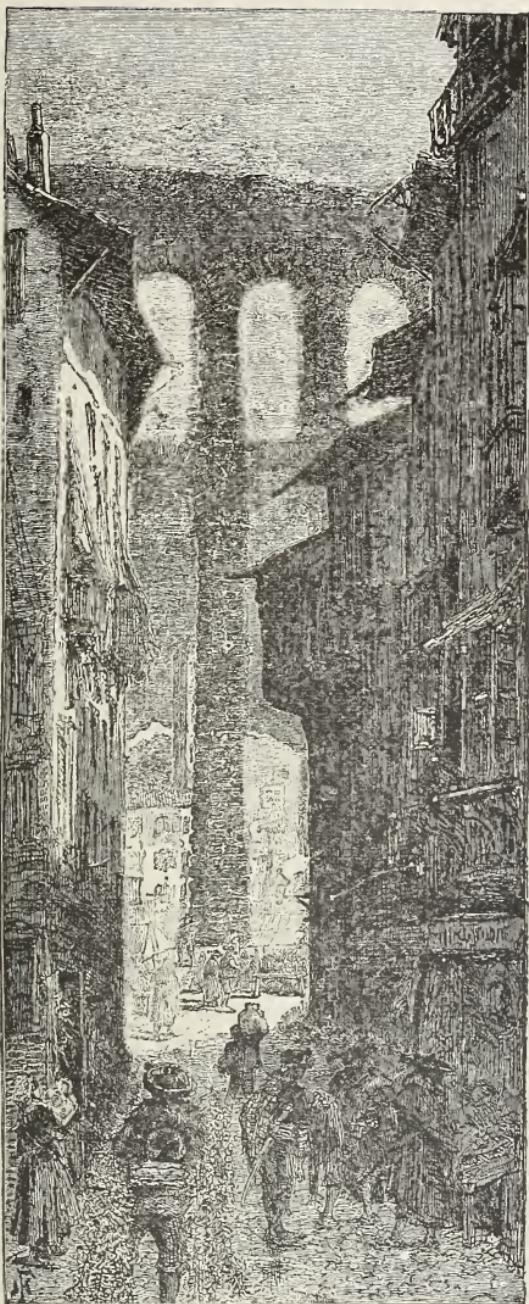
I have told you about three other famous cities, Jerusalem, Babylon, and Athens. Rome was never so large or magnificent as Babylon. It never had such noble men as the prophets of Jerusalem, or such wise men and great poets as were at Athens, but in

some ways Rome was more important than any of these other cities, for it became the head and centre of a great empire.

At first the people lived very simply. They had no emperors for hundreds of years, but got on without one very well part of the time, somewhat as we do in the United States. But the Romans were an ambitious people; that is, they were not content with living as they had done. They wanted more land, more money, more power. They sent out from Rome a great many armies of soldiers and conquered the countries all about them. They had many wars with people of other nations, and although they were sometimes beaten, yet in the end they always made themselves the masters.

They sent companies of their own people to settle in these countries, and Roman cities and Roman laws were everywhere. They made all these countries which they had conquered pay them a great deal of money, so they became very rich indeed. On many accounts this wealth was a bad thing. It made the Romans lazy and selfish. They had a great many slaves who did all their work and they had nothing to do but enjoy themselves.

They began to have splendid palaces and temples. They had no pipes and waterworks such as we have, to bring water into our houses, and force it up to the highest rooms, so they built long watercourses on high, stone arches, and carried water from the



ROMAN AQUEDUCT, OR WATERCOURSE.

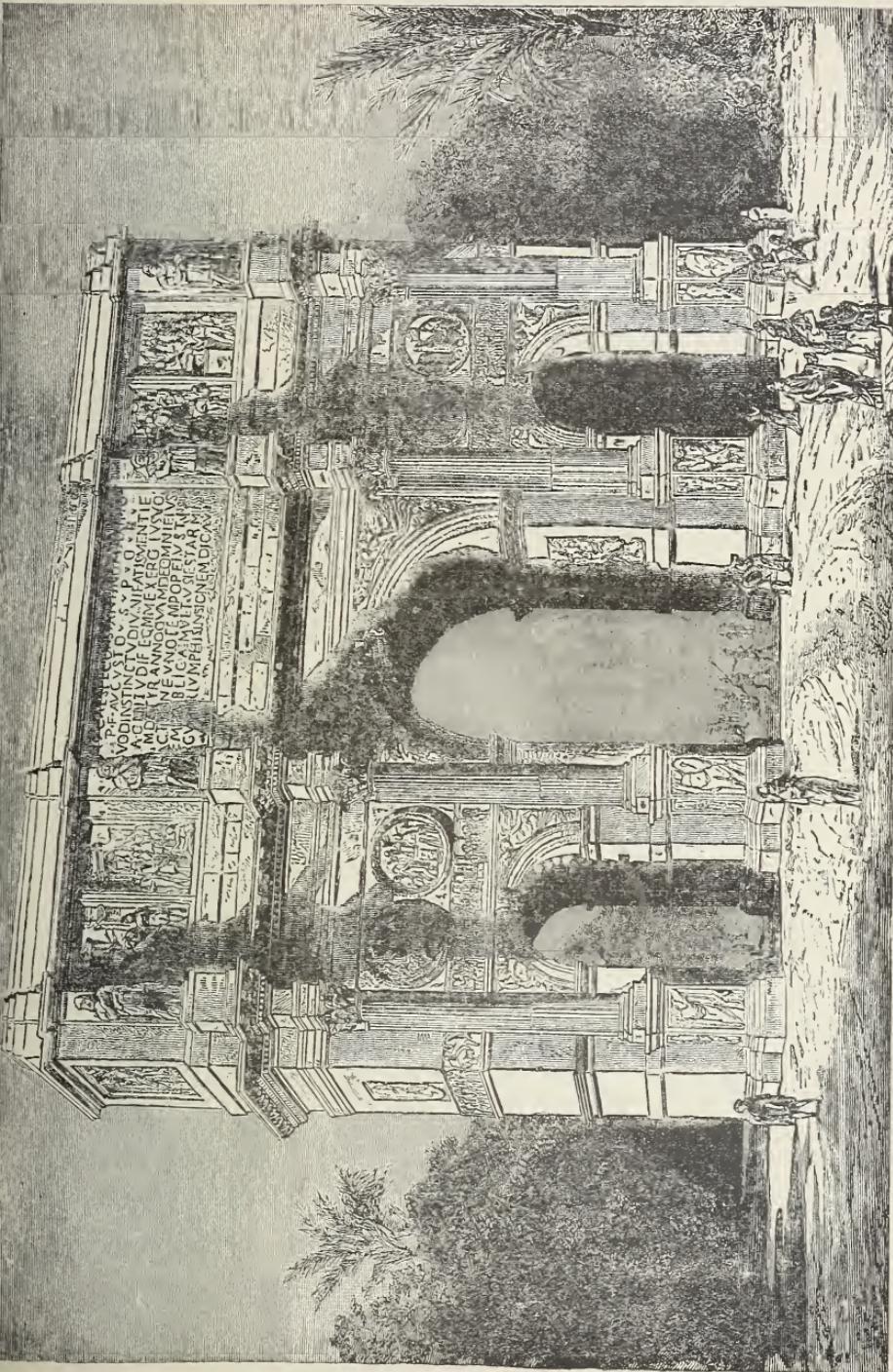
hills, off in the country, across a level plain into the city. This alone cost many millions of dollars.

They built also great baths. These were magnificent buildings, as large as an immense hotel. They were made of marble, and had large, fine bathing rooms, where the young men liked to meet and take hot or cold baths, and let their slaves rub, and perfume, and anoint their bodies.

Among the useful things which the Romans did, was to build long, straight roads finely paved with stone. They also built many bridges, and made every thing so strong and solid, that some of their work has lasted to this day, and I presume every thing which they built would have remained if it had not been destroyed on purpose.

The Romans, first of all people, used arches a great deal in their bridges and buildings. Arches that are not pointed in the middle, but are simply half a circle, are called Roman arches, because that is the kind the Romans used. An arch, you know, is very strong; all the stones are pressed together and held tight by the one in the middle, called the keystone, and the arch cannot easily be broken, for each part depends on the other.

The power of the Roman empire was a good deal like that of the arch, which they were so fond of making. Each part was made to depend on Rome itself, which was the centre, and so it held together as a nation much longer and better than many other nations have done.



ARCH BUILT IN HONOR OF THE ROMAN EMPEROR CONSTANTINE

It came to be said that Rome was the mistress of the world, and it was true that for a long time Rome ruled over almost all the earth that was known.

After the death of Alexander the Great, who had conquered so much of the world, there was no one to take his place, and the Romans being stronger than the Greeks, conquered them. The Jews fell into the hands of the Romans, and when we come to read of the noble Christian missionary, Paul, we shall see that though he was a Jew, he called himself a Roman, for he had been born with the rights of a Roman citizen. It was thought a fine thing to have been born a Roman.

The Romans had a religion which was more like that of the Greeks than that of the Persians or the Jews. They had a great many temples and statues of the gods, but their religion was not so simple and beautiful as the religion of the Greeks. The Romans were fine soldiers, and made a system of wise laws. More than any other people they knew how to rule with a strong hand, and to do every thing according to a strict order or system. But as a nation they were stern and severe; they were not cheerful and happy like the Greeks, and they did not know how to make beautiful statues and write and speak in the fine style of the Greeks. The Romans never had so great a poet as Homer nor so wise a philosopher as Plato or Socrates.

After they had grown rich and powerful and had

conquered Greece, they brought thousands of Greek workmen and sculptors and teachers over to Rome to teach them, and to build temples, and carve beautiful statues for them. Many of these Greeks, although they were much handsomer and wiser than their masters, were really slaves, and were bought and sold just as the poor black slaves were bought and sold in our own country when your papa was a little boy.

I have told you about the Roman general named Pompey, who, after he had conquered Jerusalem, dared to enter the Temple and go into the Holy of Holies to see what it was that the Jews held so sacred. He took some of the Jews with him when he went back to Rome. It was the custom for Roman conquerors when they came home, to bring captives with them, and to make them march through the streets in the great procession which was made in their honor. These poor captives were often bound in chains, and after the crowd had laughed and mocked at them, they were cruelly put to death.

Pompey spared many of these Jews, and they were not put to death, but were allowed to live by themselves in a little corner of the city.

About this time, which was some years before Herod began to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem, there lived a very famous man named Julius Cæsar. He was a great general, and was perhaps the greatest soldier from the time of Alexander the Great down to the time of our own nineteenth century.

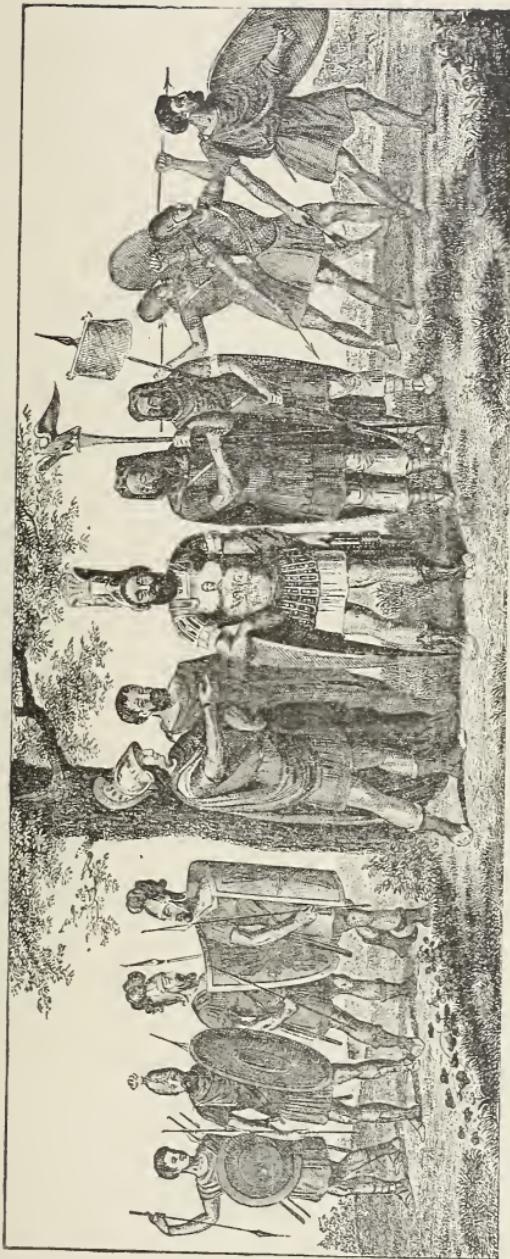
He travelled far and wide with his brave Roman soldiers, conquering all the fierce tribes who lived to the west of Rome. He was not so cruel as many conquerors of his time, and made his enemies respect him. Many of those he conquered became Roman soldiers. On one of his journeys, it is said, he went as far as the country which we now call England.

Although there was a great deal which was cruel and dreadful about all these many wars and the taking away the freedom of so many brave people, yet it was not entirely bad. The Latin language which the Romans spoke and the Roman customs and laws were carried among wild, ignorant people; the good roads, the strong forts and walls and fine buildings to which the Romans were accustomed, were quite new to these people, who lived in the great forests and marshes, where now the French, and German, and English people live.

These wild people had different languages which we do not know. They did not speak English and French and German as the people do who live there now.

Caesar had such power that at last many people began to be afraid of him. They feared that he wanted to be emperor, and Rome had never had an emperor. So one day, as he stood in Rome before the statue of Pompey in the senate-house, five senators rushed upon him and stabbed him.

The story of the life and death of this great man



ROMAN SOLDIERS.

is one of the most interesting in the world, and you will sometime like to get some friend to read to you the play which Shakespeare has written about it.

I knew a bright little boy only six years old, who used to think there was nothing more interesting than to sit in his papa's lap after tea and hear him read this play about the brave old Romans who lived so long ago.

It was not long after the death of Julius Cæsar, however, before the Romans did have an emperor. He was called Cæsar Augustus, and it was while he was at the head of the great Roman nation that, far east of Rome, in a little village in the country of the Jews, was born a child whose name shall be everywhere known when all the emperors of the world have long been forgotten.

Now we must leave the great, proud city of Rome for a little while, and travel back east, beyond Greece and Egypt, to the same country and village where, about one thousand years before, David, the shepherd boy, had tended his flock.





CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE TIME WHEN JESUS WAS BORN.

I DO not think you need to be told that it was the little baby Jesus whom I mean. You have heard how this great emperor, Cæsar Augustus, had ordered all the people to be taxed, and how, when Mary and Joseph were on their way to Jerusalem to pay the taxes, the little child was born in the stable of an inn at the village of Bethlehem.

Now, before we begin to talk about the wonderful life which came so long ago to bless this world of ours, let us stop a little and see what the world was doing and thinking at that time, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight years ago.

The country of the Jews had different names at different times. It is called "Palestine" now, but when Jesus was born the northern part of the country was called "Galilee," and the southern part, where Jerusalem and Bethlehem were, was called "Judea." This, you remember, had once been the kingdom of Judah.

Between Galilee and Judea was Samaria, where the Samaritans lived. Most of the Jews despised

the Samaritans, and when they wanted to go from Judea to Galilee, they generally went around Samaria rather than go through it.

The language spoken by most of the Jews was not the old Hebrew which David and the prophets had used, but another language somewhat like it.

All over the country, on the rocky hills, and in the green valleys, there were little villages. They were very different from the little villages in our country, with their broad streets, their rows of wooden houses, their little gardens, and sidewalks with lines of shade-trees in front of them.

If you had been a little Jewish boy or girl, and had lived eighteen hundred and eighty-eight years ago in one of these little villages, this is how it would have been: You would have lived in a little flat-roofed house, built of rough bricks or stones. There would have been only two or three rooms, and one of these would have been used as the stable for the asses and cows. You would have had no glass in the windows, and there would have been no sink, no stove, and no fire-place. On cold days there would have been a little pan of burning charcoal put in the middle of the room, and you and the other children would have sat around it on the floor and warmed your hands. *We* should get very tired sitting cross-legged on the floor, but I suppose little John and James, the fisherman's boys, did not mind it at all, for they were used to it, and had no chairs.

The boys had no knickerbockers, nor shoes, nor jackets with pockets in them. They had no stockings, but wore sandals, and both boys and girls dressed much alike in a kind of loose robe. As it was generally pretty warm, they did not need to stay in the house so much as we do, and sometimes they even slept outside on their flat roofs.

If you had been little Peter, or Andrew, or James, or John, or any other little boy, I suppose you would have gone to the school, which was in the synagogue, or place of worship ; and you would have sat on the floor, with rows of other boys, and studied in a very noisy fashion. You would have learned a great deal about Moses and Ezra, and committed to memory what they wrote, and you would have learned to write. But there would have been no music, nor drawing, nor arithmetic, nor geography, nothing but the Jewish Scriptures.

If you had been little Mary or Elizabeth, or any other little girl, you would not have learned much about reading and writing, but would have stayed at home and learned to spin and cook.

On Friday night the house would have been trimmed and made ready for the Sabbath. When Saturday, which was the Jewish Sabbath, came, there could be no work, no hard lessons, and no one could walk more than a mile. There were many strict rules about keeping the Sabbath which would seem very strange to us, yet I think, on the whole, it was quite a happy day.

All the people went to the synagogue and sat on the floor, while some one, whose business it was for the day, took a roll of parchment and read aloud from parts of the law and the writings of the prophets; then he sometimes explained what he had read. There was no regular minister, nor sermon, and no music.

The synagogues in the villages were not in the least like the Temple at Jerusalem, for there was nothing splendid about them, and there were no priests nor sacrifices.

If you had been little Andrew or Mary, and had lived in one of these dull little villages, you would have been very happy, when, three times a year, it came time to go up to Jerusalem to keep the feasts. Sometimes these feasts lasted a week or more, and the great crowds of people took branches of trees and built themselves little huts, in which they slept on the hill-sides outside the city walls.

It must have been as good as Christmas or the Fourth of July or Thanksgiving to the little folks, to see all these strange sights and new things! There was the beautiful marble Temple, the musicians, and the processions of priests, and a great deal that was very solemn and splendid.

The old people taught the little ones what all this meant, and told them stories about David, and Solomon, and the wonderful history of their people. They all felt very glad and proud to think that they

were Jews, and could call themselves the children of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.

Sometimes little Andrew and Mary and the other children must have noticed certain men on the street and around the Temple, who wore a little box tied around their foreheads or on their arms. If they had asked what this box was they would have found out that it contained some texts from the law, which were supposed to be able to keep off danger and illness. We know now how useless and foolish such things are, but in those times most people believed in them.

There were four classes of men among the Jews, of whom the children would soon have learned. One of these classes were the "Rabbis." These were the teachers of the law, and were the wise men. "Rabbi" means master, or lord. Another class were the "Scribes," who were somewhat like the Rabbis, for they studied and taught the law; but too often they cared a great deal more about copying every little word and mark of the law exactly right, than they did about loving God. As we sometimes say, they cared "more about the letter than the spirit of the law."

The names of the other two classes, which all the children must have learned, were the "Pharisees" and the "Sadducees." These people did not agree with each other in regard to many ideas in their religion. The Pharisees believed that all people are

immortal, just as Socrates, the Greek, had believed and taught three hundred years before. The Sadducees did not believe this. The Pharisees taught that all persons should be just as religious as the priests were ; and they were very strict and particular about keeping up all the religious customs. They often prayed on the streets, and they never thought of sitting down to eat until after they had thoroughly washed themselves and asked a blessing on the food. Many of the Scribes were Pharisees.

Now, all the great prophets had been dead for many years. Neither among the Jews nor the Greeks, nor any other people, had there been a great religious leader or teacher for hundreds of years.

The Romans were beginning to disbelieve in their gods; their religion gave them no comfort, for there was no love in it. The Jews believed in the one true God, and they had come to think of Him as a Father; but they did not see that He was the Father of all people, as well as of their own little race, as the Christians came to believe. Their religion had come to be rather dull and lifeless. They often thought more of saying long prayers and offering sacrifices, than they did about loving their neighbors.

The hearts of men were hungry and restless ; they wanted something better than they had known, but they did not know what it was, nor how it was to come to them.

Among the Jews there was a very strong hope

that some great leader would come who would defeat the Romans who ruled over them, and make them a free people. They did not know whether he would be a prophet or a king or a great general; but they expected some one who should be their leader and guide; and this one for whom they looked they called the "Messiah."

At last, "in the fulness of time," a little child was born. He did not become a great general or a king, and he did not bring that glory and honor to the Jewish people which they had expected. But he brought God to men. He showed men the way to become "sons of God and heirs with him." He himself was the "Way, the Truth, and the Life," and it is only by living his kind of a life and following his way, that the best things, the only things for which life is worth living, can ever be gained.

This was not what the Jews had expected; it was infinitely better, though they did not know it.

His friends who believed in him called him "the Christ," which means the same as the Hebrew word "Messiah"; that is, the "Anointed One," or the one whom God had sent to lead His people.





CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE TWO PREACHERS.

THREE are four little books which tell us about the life of Jesus, the Christ. These are often called "Gospels," and are bound together in our Bibles and put at the beginning of the New Testament. They were not written first however, although they are put first. They were written many years after Jesus' death, when all the people who had seen and known him well, were either dead or very old.

As Jesus himself did not write any books or letters which have been saved, almost all we know about his life must be learned from these old friends of his, who wrote down what they remembered or had heard about him. Probably only one or two of the four men who wrote about him ever saw him.

We should be very glad if we could know every thing that Jesus did and said, but unfortunately we know very little. That little, however, is more important than what is found in all the other books of the Bible. And because it is the most important, you will be sure to read it more than any other part; so

I shall not say a great deal about it, for this book is written to tell you things, which you will not be so likely to know.

We know almost nothing about the things which Jesus did and said when he was a boy. We hear of his going with his parents from the little village of Nazareth, where he lived, down to Jerusalem to attend one of the feasts. He was twelve years old then.

He had probably been to the boys' school in the synagogue, and had learned by heart many of the words of Moses and David and Isaiah. Probably at home he had to work pretty hard, and help Joseph, who was a carpenter; and he did not often have a chance to talk to the Rabbis and other learned men, and to ask them questions. The story tells us that when he went to Jerusalem, his one thought was to talk with the wise men in the Temple. Most boys would have cared more to run about the city and see the fine sights, but he cared so much to improve the chance to learn something, that he forgot when it came time to go home, and stayed behind in the Temple. When, after three days, his mother returned and found him, she told him how anxious she and his father had been about him, fearing he was lost, but he said in surprise: "Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" Then he went back with them to Nazareth, and we know scarcely any thing about him for the next eighteen years.

When Jesus was about thirty years old, he left Nazareth for a little while, and went down to the valley of the Jordan River to hear a wonderful preacher who was drawing great crowds out of the cities to hear him.

This preacher was John, called "the Baptist," because he baptized those who believed his teaching. He was a strange, wild-looking man, probably somewhat like the prophet Elijah, who had lived many hundred years before. He ate locusts and wild honey and wore a rough garment of camel's hair.

John was a brave man who spoke out boldly. He warned people to repent, and told them that their sins would be punished. He despised the efforts which the Pharisees made to appear very pious, when at heart they were selfish, and he called them hard names. He told them not to feel proud because they were the children of Abraham. Those who heard him were startled at his earnestness and his stern words, and asked him what they should do.

He told them they must begin to live honest, true lives. If they had been selfish and had kept more money or goods than they needed, while others had not enough, they must begin to give; if they had been sharp at a bargain, they must now deal fairly; if they had been harsh or cruel, they must become kind and gentle.

John expected that the Messiah would come, and he told the people that after him would come one so

much greater than he, that he should not be worthy to unloose his shoes.

After a while John spoke so boldly against all wrong-doers, even against the ruler, Herod, that he was angry with him and shut him up in prison.

Before this time, however, Jesus had heard John preach and had been baptized by him in the river Jordan. After this, Jesus went off alone by himself into a wilderness and stayed many days fasting and praying, and thinking over the kind of life which he should choose to live. Should he win honor and power by living a sinful, selfish life, by serving the devil, as we sometimes say, or should he give up every thing for truth, and choose the hard, painful, self-denying life? Should he choose to make himself a great, famous leader, and bring honor and glory to his race, and so be praised by all men? or should he be content to do his Father's will and be "despised and rejected of men"? We must not imagine that Jesus could have been tempted to do wrong with any of the common temptations that most men have. The kind of temptation which could come to one as pure and Godlike as Jesus, is something that we can hardly understand, just as a savage whose temptations are to murder and to steal would not be able to understand the kind of temptations which a sweet, noble saint might have.

Whatever this story of the temptation may mean, it was certainly a great and bitter struggle from

which Jesus came away the conqueror. It was not the last nor the only temptation which he had, but this, the greatest one, had been mastered, and all those that came after him must have seemed easier. The choice of his life was made; joyfully he went about his work, and calmly looked forward to the labor and pain and anguish which were to come to him.

After Jesus had chosen his work, he returned to his home in Galilee and began to teach and preach somewhat as John had done. John heard about it in prison, and sent to him, saying: "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" meaning, "Art thou the Messiah, the Christ, or not?"

Jesus did not send back a direct answer, but told John's friends to go back and tell him how he was curing the sick, raising the dead, and preaching the gospel to the poor. Then Jesus began to tell the people what a great man John was; he said that no man had been greater than this fearless preacher.

John had lived in a very plain, simple way, hardly allowing himself any of the comforts of life, while Jesus, on the other hand, dressed and ate and lived very much as other people did.

Yet the mass of the people did not understand either of them, but found fault with both. Because John lived differently from other people, they said he had a "devil"; and because Jesus did not separate himself from the world, but went to weddings and

drank wine, as every one in those days did, and because he made friends with many who were not good, they said: "He is gluttonous and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners." The publicans were tax collectors, and were sometimes so unjust that the people hated them.

One day after John the Baptist had lain in prison a long time, King Herod had a feast in his palace. It was his birthday, and to please him, a young girl came in and danced before him.

Herod was so greatly pleased with her that he promised to surely give her any thing that she asked for. I suppose that he did not dream what a terrible thing she would want. The girl went out and asked her mother, who was the wife of Herod, what she should ask him to do for her.

Her mother's name was Herodias. She hated John because he had found fault with her for her wrong-doing; so she told her daughter to ask for the head of John the Baptist.

The king was very sorry when he heard of it, but was ashamed to break the bad promise which he had made, so he sent to the prison and had the great preacher beheaded. Then the disciples of John, mourning for their master, took his body, and after burying it, went and told Jesus.

Jesus knew that if he dared to preach boldly as John had done, his end would be the same, but he did not stop nor turn back from what he had begun.

His heart ached for the poor, ignorant people who flocked about him; he said they were like "sheep without a shepherd."

We do not know exactly how long Jesus went about preaching, healing the sick, and doing good, after the time of his great temptation in the wilderness. It certainly was not over three years, yet it was long enough to start such a change in the thoughts of men, that the whole world has come to feel the effects of it, and we count Christ's coming as the most important thing in all history.

The different men who wrote the story of his life, did not tell us where or when many things happened, so we do not know so much about them as we would like to.

Part of the time Jesus preached in Galilee among his old neighbors. Many of them did not think much of him. They said he was only a carpenter's son and had never done any thing wonderful before, and so could not know much. One day he stood up in their synagogue and taught them in such a wise, strong way, that they were all astonished. They were soon angry with him, however, for he spoke truth which they did not want to hear, and they took him to the edge of a hill, meaning to throw him over; but when they looked in his face, they must have seen something there that startled and awed them, for they drew back and dared not lay their hands on him.

John had disciples who followed him about and listened to his teaching, and so did Jesus also. They were nearly all poor men, some of them fishermen ; among these were two brothers, named James and John, and two other brothers named Andrew, and Simon, afterwards called Peter. One of them was a tax collector named Matthew.

They left their work and their families and followed Jesus wherever he went, for he taught them that every one must be willing to leave home and friends, if need be, and every thing that was dearest, for the sake of the truth.

Sometimes he preached in the synagogues of the villages where he was staying, but generally he spoke out of doors, on the hillside, in a boat by the seashore, or under some tree by the roadside—wherever the crowds gathered.

He loved to have little children come to him and climb up on his knees, and when his friends were afraid they would trouble him, and tried to send them away, he said : “ Let the little children come unto me, and do not forbid them ; for of such is the kingdom of God.” Then he took them in his arms and blessed them.

Here is a little song which tells about Jesus and the children.

“ ‘ The Master has come over Jordan,’
Said Hannah, the mother, one day ;

“ He is healing the people who throng him,
With a touch of his fingers, they say.
And now I will carry the children,
Little Rachel, and Samuel and John,
And dear little Esther, the baby,
For the Master to look upon.’

“ The father then looked at her kindly,
And said as he tenderly smiled :
‘ Now who but a fond, loving mother
Would think of a project so wild ?
If the children were tortured by demons,
Or dying of fever, 't were well,
Or had they the taint of the leper,
Like many among us who dwell.’

“ ‘ Nay, nay, do not hinder me, Nathan,
I feel such a burden of care ;
And if to the Master I tell it,
That burden he 'll help me to bear,
If he lay but his hands on the children,
My heart will be lighter, I know,
For a blessing for ever and ever,
Will follow them as they go.’

“ So over the mountains of Judah,
Along with the vines all so green,
With Esther asleep on her bosom,
And Rachel her brothers between ;
With the people who hung on his teaching,
Or waited a touch or a word,
Through the row of proud Pharisees hastening,
She pressed to the feet of the Lord.

“ Now why shouldst thou hinder the Master,
Said Peter, ‘ with children like these ?
Thou knowest from morn until evening,
He is teaching, and healing disease.’
Said Jesus : ‘ Forbid not the children,
Permit them to come unto me.’
Then he took in his arms little Esther,
And Rachel he sat on his knee.

“ The care-stricken heart of the mother
Was lifted all sorrow above ;
His hand kindly laid on the children,
He blest them with holiest love,
And said of the babes in his bosom,
‘ Of such are the kingdom of heaven.’
Then strength for all duty and trial,
That hour to her spirit was given.”





CHAPTER XL.

THE CHRIST.

THE most interesting stories of Jesus are those that tell of his miracles, of his giving sight to the blind, casting out devils, and doing many other wonderful things. But although these are the most interesting, they are not the most important stories.

As I said once before, there is no miracle more wonderful than many common things which happen every day, and which we do not wonder about just because they are so common. Think how wonderful it is that we can speak through the telephone and be heard many miles away; and that a tiny seed, by the help of the earth and the light, air, and water, can be changed into a great tree!

We read in the ancient writings that many other people besides Jesus performed miracles. They were not always the best and noblest men. One of the old Hebrew stories tells us of some Egyptians at the court of Pharaoh who changed their rods into serpents, and this is as wonderful as any miracle of which we read in the New Testament.

Jesus himself told his disciples that they should do greater things than he had done; so we see that the true reason why all the world should love and follow him, and find in him a Saviour, is not because he did wonderful miracles, but is on account of what he taught and because of what he was.

The parables which Jesus told, and the reports of the conversations which he had with his disciples are very important, and I wish we all knew them by heart.

The writers of the four gospels tell us of about thirty parables which Jesus spoke. These were little stories told to teach some great truth. Among the most interesting are those of the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, the Sower with his Seed, and the Pharisee and the Publican. You must be sure to know these at least. All the parables are so beautiful and simple that you can easily understand them in the words of Jesus himself. I need not tell them to you.

Among the most beautiful and important sayings of Jesus are those which are gathered together from his different conversations, called the "Sermon on the Mount." The first part is called "The Beatitudes," and every one should know these by heart. They begin, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"; this, you know, means that those who are not proud and selfish, but gentle and humble, shall, even now, while on this earth,

have the truest happiness. As Jesus said : “The kingdom of God is within you.”

He was always teaching that riches and power could do nothing to make a man reach what was really the highest and best. It was only by knowing the Heavenly Father and by growing to be like him that men could ever have “heaven” within them.

Jesus was always poor. As he said of himself, he “had not where to lay his head,” and when night came, he had nowhere to go unless some stranger asked him to his home.

There were a few homes where he was always welcome and where he gladly went. One was the home of Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus, in the little town of Bethany, near Jerusalem. But Jesus did not have much time for friendly visits such as he loved ; his life was too busy and earnest to be spent like that of other men.

He loved the poor and ignorant people who flocked about him, and was always tender even to the most wicked one, if he was sorry and wanted to begin to live a better life. But he was very stern and severe, as John the Baptist had been, towards mean, selfish people who made a great pretence of being good.

The ruler of a synagogue once blamed him because he had healed a sick woman on the Sabbath day. Jesus knew that this same ruler led his ox and ass to water on the Sabbath day, and calling him a



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“hypocrite,” he sternly asked him if it were not as important that this poor woman, who had suffered for eighteen years, should be healed, as that animals should be cared for.

There are several other stories which show us how much Jesus was criticised because he did not observe all the strict Jewish traditions about those things which were to be done or not to be done on the Sabbath. He was vexed and sad at heart to see how stupidly and blindly the people tried to obey the exact words of the law, and forgot the justice and love for which the law was made, and he said, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.”

On one of his visits to Jerusalem as he went to the Temple, he saw there crowds of men selling sheep, and oxen and doves to those who wished to buy them for sacrifices, and also the tables of the men who sat with different kinds of money before them and made change. They were all carrying on their business inside the Temple, and of course there was a great deal of noise and confusion as there is in a market-place. Jesus was very indignant at this, and making a little whip of small cords, he commanded them all to take their things away, and drove them from the Temple, saying, “Make not my Father’s house a house of trade. It is written: ‘My house shall be called the house of prayer,’ but ye make it a den of robbers.”

At another time Jesus was in the Temple and saw the rich people putting their offerings into the treasury, somewhat as in our churches people put their money into the contribution-box. At last a poor widow came, and she put in two mites, which is less than one cent, but Jesus, knowing the love that was in the poor woman's heart, said that she had given more than they all, for she gave all that she had, while the rich, although they had actually given more money, did not really give so much, for they did not feel the loss of it at all, since they had an abundance left.

We generally think of Jesus as too meek and gentle ever to say any thing severe. But never did any one speak out more sternly against all pretence and meanness than he did. "Fools, hypocrites, blind guides, serpents, vipers," he called the scribes and Pharisees.

Sometimes when they heard these burning words of rebuke and saw the light of indignation in those clear, honest eyes, it made them turn away ashamed and sorry. One of the Pharisees named Nicodemus longed to know more of this wonderful teacher. He did not like to be seen talking to him by day, so he went to him by night. The Master saw that Nicodemus was different from most of the other Pharisees, and he began at once talking earnestly to him. He saw how completely this man needed to be changed in all his thoughts and feelings, and he

said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." It was hard for Nicodemus to understand this; perhaps he never did quite understand it, but he never forgot it. He must have loved Jesus, for afterwards when he was to be brought before the rulers to be tried, Nicodemus alone among them all tried to help him; and later, when the trial and cruel death had come, it was this same Pharisee who brought much precious and costly ointment to put upon the dead body when it was laid in the tomb.

One day, Jesus was dining at the house of a Pharisee named Simon, and a woman who had led a wicked life came in, hoping she might see the Master. As she heard his gentle words and looked into his pure face, her tears began to fall. She thought of her past sinful life, and longed to be better and to show him her love. Stooping down she tenderly anointed his feet with precious ointment which she brought, and with her long hair wiped away the tears as they fell.

The Pharisees looked at this with astonishment, thinking Jesus could not know what kind of a woman she was, or he would not have let her touch him. But to Jesus the love of this poor woman was far sweeter than all the honors which any great man could pay him, and he said to her, "Thy sins are forgiven."

Several other beautiful stories have come down

to us which show how tender Jesus was to those whom every one else despised.

One day, when he was travelling through Samaria, he sat down beside a well to rest. A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and they began to talk together. He asked her to give him a drink of water, and she was surprised, for the Jews disliked the Samaritans so much that they would hardly speak to them. As he felt the cool water on his thirsty lips, he looked at the woman who stood before him and saw how ignorant and sinful she was. He longed to give the water of life to her thirsty soul. And he said : “Every one that drinketh of *this* water shall thirst again ; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst ; but the water which I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life.”

As he went on talking in his tender, earnest voice, the woman listened, trying to understand the strange words which he spoke ; she wondered if this could be the Christ, the Messiah whom all had expected. And Jesus said to her : “I that speak unto thee am he.”

His disciples, who had been away for a little while, now came back, and were much surprised that he should talk with such a woman. They brought him food which they had just bought, and begged him to eat. But the thought of the great

work which he was to do so filled his mind that he was no longer hungry; he could not eat, and said to them: "I have meat to eat that ye know not of. My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work."

This thought never left him by night or day. He had come to save men from their sins, to bring the kingdom of God into their hearts, to show them what God was, and to teach even the worst of sinners that he, too, if he only would, might become God's child.

Alone upon the mountain at night, even until break of day, he talked with his Father, and gained wisdom and strength for what he had given himself to do.





CHAPTER XLI.

THE MASTER AND HIS FOLLOWERS.

AMONG the twelve disciples, Peter, James, and John were Jesus' special friends. He often took them with him when he left the others and went away from the crowds who followed him.

Although they knew him best, they often misunderstood him, for his words had a deeper meaning than they could grasp; but years afterward, when he was gone, they remembered many things which he had said, and his words came to have a new meaning to them.

He told them that he was the "bread of life"; they thought he spoke of real bread, and did not know what he meant; just as the Samaritan woman did not understand him when he told her that he would give her to drink of the "water of life," and she would never thirst. They came to see at last that he was speaking of what would give life to the soul instead of the body.

To those who did not see the deeper meaning of his teaching, he sometimes said they had eyes but did not see and ears but did not hear.

The truths that Jesus gave his disciples were not always new. He was glad to gather up the best teachings which had been in the world before he came, and to teach them again to his disciples. He said he did not come to destroy the teachings of the good men who had lived before his time, but he came to "fulfil" them ; that is, to fill them full with new life and meaning.

The beautiful Golden Rule, which tells us that we should do to others what we wish them to do to us, was not entirely new to the world. It had been taught before, and he taught it again to his disciples because it was so important and true.

Once, when they asked him to teach them how to pray, he gave them in simple words a little prayer containing the very best thoughts that had been used in the prayers of the Rabbis before his time. It was very different from the long prayers which the Pharisees loved to pray while standing at the street corners that they might be seen by every one.

All the disciples except one, named Judas Iscariot, loved Jesus and believed in him.

The high priests and the rulers of the Jews had always disliked Jesus. They did not understand him in the least. They feared the power which he was beginning to have over the minds of his followers, so they tried to put a stop to his work.

They made a bargain with Judas, who was a traitor, that they would pay him thirty pieces of sil-

ver if he would tell them where Jesus was and give them a good chance to arrest him. Judas was a mean, deceitful man, who cared more for money than for the life of his best friend; so he told them where Jesus was to be.

One evening in spring-time, Jesus gathered with his disciples in a large upper room in a house in Jerusalem, and ate the last supper which they ever had together. It was the night when the Jewish feast called the Passover was kept.

Once before this, the disciples had disputed among themselves as to which of them should be the greatest, and Jesus had told them that he who would be greatest must serve the others, and he had said: "I am among you as he that serveth."

So, now, as he knew he must soon leave them, he felt that they needed to have this lesson fixed in their minds again, and after the supper, taking a towel and a basin, he went from one to the other and washed and wiped their feet. They looked on, wondering greatly to see him who was their Lord and Master serving them; but he said: "If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

As Jesus looked upon these friends whom he was so soon to leave, his heart was filled with divine pity and love, and he spoke to them the tenderest and sweetest words ever written.

He knew that, after he left them, they would be separated, and often made to suffer for his sake ; but he told them they should not be left comfortless, for the heavenly Father would send His Holy Spirit to comfort and to teach them, and to tell them what to say in the time of trial.

He knew that differences might arise among them, and he begged them always to be true to one another and to him. "Even as the Father hath loved me," he said, "I also have loved you ; abide ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. Remember the word which I said unto you, a servant is not greater than his lord ; if they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. He that hateth me, hateth my Father also."

Jesus knew that his disciples must continue the work which he came to do, and so, although he knew that trouble and pain were soon to come to them, when he lifted his voice in prayer to God for them, he did not ask that they should be taken out of the world and spared the suffering, but he asked that they might be kept from evil.

As the Father had sent him, so he sent them, and he prayed that they might be united and like one person, in their thoughts and purposes, just as he and his Father were one.

Tenderly and pityingly he looked upon these men, who loved him, and who were soon to see him torn from them and made to suffer a cruel and shameful death. He knew that he should be left alone, with no earthly friend to help him, but he said : " And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you that ye might have peace ; in the world ye shall have trouble, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

These wonderful words, spoken more than eighteen hundred years ago, have been read by many millions of men and women and children since then ; sometimes they have been read carelessly and thoughtlessly by those whose eyes were shut and whose ears were deaf to their true meaning. Sometimes they have been read by noble men and women who have lost every thing that was dear to them in the world, and who have yet learned, by the help of Jesus, to feel that they were not alone, for the Father was with them. Only to those who have had a deep experience, whose eyes have been opened to see God and to know him, can these words have any real meaning. Yet it is possible for even a child to see more in them than many a man does, no matter how old or learned he may be.

After Jesus and his disciples had finished their supper and had sung a hymn, they went to a garden called Gethsemane, outside the walls of the city. Judas was not with them ; he had left them

when they were at table, and gone to tell the rulers where Jesus could be found.

Jesus left his disciples and went off alone a little way, asking them to remain and watch. Then in a great agony of spirit, he prayed to his Father that he might be spared what was to come to him: "Nevertheless," he added, "not my will, but thine be done." As he prayed, great drops of bloody sweat ran down his face. He was thinking not merely of the pain which he should bear, but of the sins of the people, for which he was to suffer.

Then he came back and found that the friends whom he had asked to watch were sleeping, for they were very tired. He sadly asked: "Could ye not watch with me one hour?" Then seeing how they needed the rest, he kindly added: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Just then came Judas with the soldiers whom he had brought to take Jesus, and going up to him, he kissed him, to show the soldiers which one he was. Then the soldiers took him, and all the disciples were frightened and ran away.

Peter had boasted that very evening at supper, that he would always be true to Jesus and never be ashamed to be called his friend. Now when Jesus was suddenly arrested and taken away, Peter followed at a distance and went into the house of the high-priest where Jesus was, to see what would be done with him.

He saw them strike Jesus and spit upon him and say that he ought to be put to death. Suddenly a girl came and said to him, "Thou also wast with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it before them all, saying, "I know not what thou sayest." Twice again that same evening others said that he had been in the company of their prisoner, but Peter, now thoroughly frightened, fearing also for his own life, stoutly denied that he knew Jesus.

Then Jesus turned and looked at Peter. That look went to his heart, and he remembered how Jesus had told him that he would prove to be weak when the temptation came. He turned away in shame and sorrow, and going out, "wept bitterly."

All the friends of Jesus had left him, and he was now alone with the men who hated him, and whose scornful, angry eyes glared at him as he stood before them.

Here we must leave him, for his life as a preacher and teacher was now ended, and it is of this part of his life only that I have tried to tell you.

All of his life that came before this, of which I have not told, and all that came after this, you will read and re-read many times and always find the story more and more wonderful.

You can surely see, even from the little which I have told you, that in Jesus the world found one who was far different from Socrates, or John the Baptist, or other noble martyrs whom we love to

honor. For to know "the truth as it is in Jesus" is to know the best that God has ever taught to men. In his own life Jesus showed the life of God to us and taught us that we too, in some measure, might become little Christs, as it were, and show the Father to those of his children who do not yet know him.





CHAPTER XLII.

THE FIRST MISSIONARY.

YOU remember I told you that although the four Gospels, called Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were placed at the beginning of the New Testament, they were not written until after some of the other books, and none were written until some time after the death of Jesus.

Probably the first writing which we have in the New Testament is a little letter written by a man who was not one of the twelve disciples, who had never seen Jesus, but who did more than any one who ever lived to make the new religion, which came to be called "Christianity," take the place of the religions of the Jews, and Greeks, and Romans.

This man was named Saul, but afterwards he called himself Paul, and that is what I shall call him in this short story of his life.

He was born in a little city called Tarsus, which was not in Palestine, where most of the Jews lived, but was between Palestine and Greece on the sea-shore.

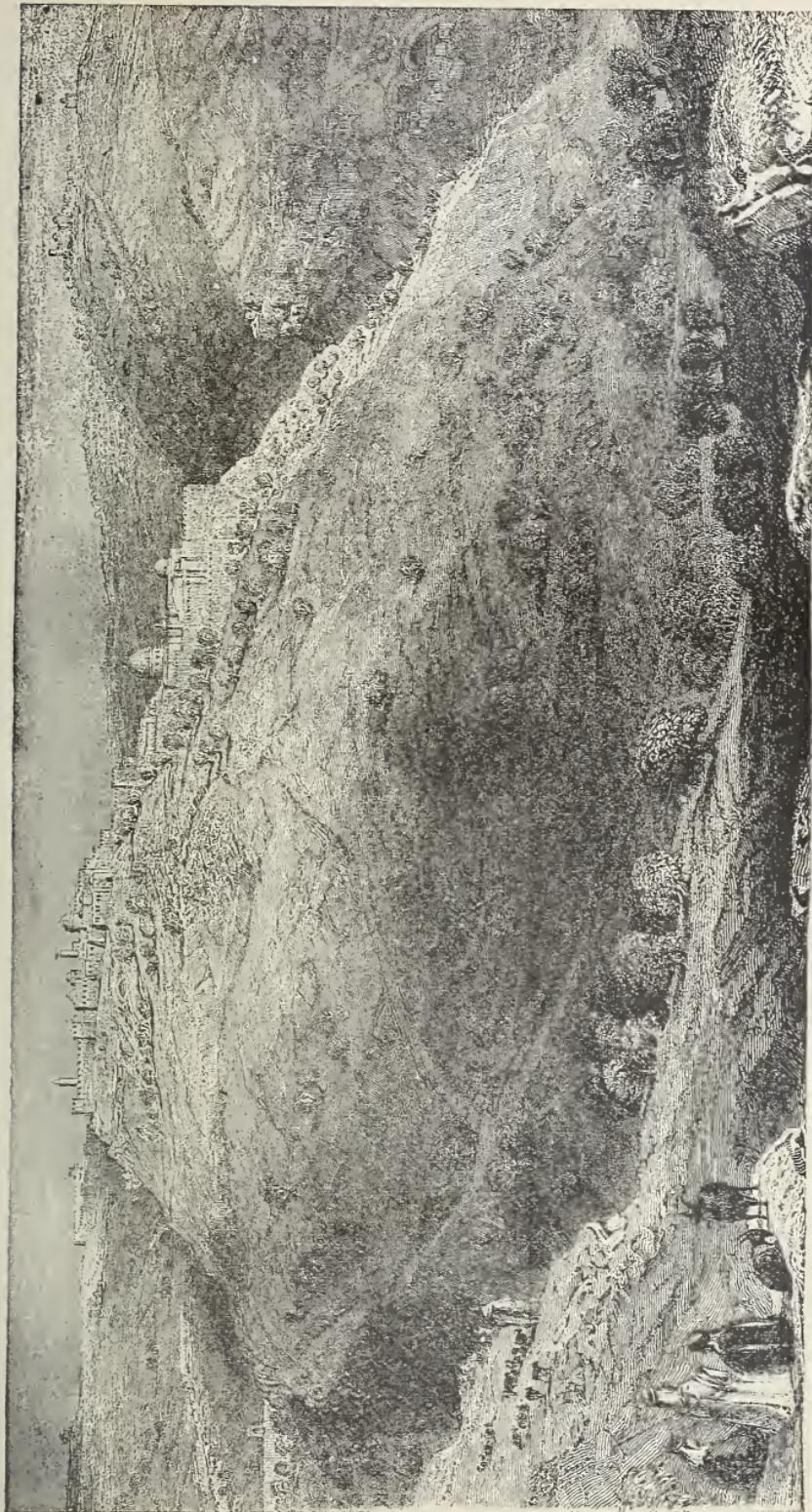
All Jewish boys were obliged to learn a trade, so that they could support themselves, and Paul learned the trade of tent-making.

He was brought up a Pharisee and was very strict indeed about fasting and keeping all the rules and customs of the Pharisees. When he was about a dozen years old probably, he was sent away to Jerusalem to school. He had been taught the history of his people, and he probably cared for it vastly more than any American boy cares for our history.

He must have been very glad to see the City of David and the Temple that he had heard so much about, and to walk the streets, where if every stone could speak, it would tell a famous story.

There was a very wise rabbi, named Gamaliel, with whom Paul studied the Jewish law. He knew the ancient Hebrew and the Greek, and doubtless also the Latin language, which the Romans spoke. He became a much more learned man than any of the twelve disciples. How long he stayed in Jerusalem, and whether he heard John the Baptist or Jesus, who were then living, we do not know.

When the first apostles began to preach about Christ, for a time no one paid much attention to them, but soon the new teaching began to make trouble. One of them, named Stephen, who was not one of the twelve disciples, but was a great apostle and preacher, was seized by those who hated his teach-



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ings, and brought before a council to be tried for his life. He stood up before all his judges, and boldly accused them of their sins, and said their fathers before them had persecuted the prophets, and they were now ready to do the same thing.

Then they rushed upon him angrily, and taking him out of the city, stoned him to death.

As Jesus on the cross prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," so Stephen, the first martyr for the new faith, as he was dying, prayed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

Paul hated the preachers of this new religion, for he thought they were wicked men whom he did right to punish. He had given consent to Stephen's death, but although for some time after this he went on treating the new converts cruelly, he never forgot how he had helped to put this noble man to death, and afterwards, when he himself became a follower of Christ, he called himself "the chief of sinners," as he thought of the harm which he had done.

One day, as he was on his way to a city called Damascus, a vision of the Lord appeared to him, and he fell to the earth in terror and astonishment. The voice of God spoke to him. Just what the vision was we do not know, but it worked a wonderful change in this man who had but just now been so fierce in persecution.

He himself became a believer in Christ and began

to preach the very things for which he had put others into prison, and this, of course, was a great surprise to every one. Before beginning on his work of preaching he went away, and for three years we hear nothing of him. Perhaps he wanted this time for studying and preparing for his work as an apostle.

When he did begin to preach he found that not only the Jews hated him and wanted to kill him, but even the apostles of the new faith, whom he now met for the first time, did not believe in him.

They soon became friends, however, for he showed them how he had been converted, and how earnestly he meant to preach that Jesus was the Christ.

He soon found that it was not safe or best for him to remain in Jerusalem, and besides, he had made up his mind to be a missionary to the Gentiles, that is, to the Greeks and other people who did not believe the religion of the Jews. He went back to his old home at Tarsus and began to preach there. Then he set out in company with an apostle named Barnabas, and went about from city to city, and preached, and started little churches which soon began to take the name of Christ and call themselves Christian.

Paul was probably a short, plain-looking man. We read that he had some bodily trouble; whether it was nearsightedness, or lameness, or stammering, or what it was, we do not know. He prayed that

he might be freed from it, but he never was, and so he tried to bear it patiently, and in spite of it he made himself a great power, so that men forgot it and thought only of his burning words of truth and wisdom.

After a while he made another journey with a preacher named Silas. This time he went farther west and came among the Greeks, and went to their beautiful city of Athens, where you remember Socrates had lived more than four hundred years before.

Athens was filled with fine temples and statues of the gods and goddesses, of whom I told you in the chapter on the Greeks.

Everywhere, as Paul went about, he met polite, well-dressed, intelligent people. They were not believers in the true God, and yet they were not at all like the ignorant heathen to whom we send missionaries on the *Morning Star*. Paul knew how to talk to them much better than Peter or James or the other disciples would have done, because he knew their language and customs and ideas, and no doubt had read many of their famous books.

The people were always interested to hear new things, and were curious to see what Paul would say; so, one day, standing on the top of a little hill which was named after Mars, the Greek god of war, he talked plainly to them. He said as he passed along the street he had seen an altar on which was

inscribed : "To the Unknown God." It seems the Greeks were so afraid some god would be forgotten and not have an altar, that they thought it safest to put up this one. Paul said he would tell them about this God whom they did not know.

He told them that in God "we live, and move, and have our being !" and that, as one of their own poets had said, "We are also his children." Then he added, if we are his children, we ought not to imagine that God is like an image of gold or silver which man has made. In past time God had excused them on account of their ignorance, but now they had heard the truth they must begin new lives.

When Paul went back to Jerusalem after his second journey, he knew that trouble awaited him, for the Jews were very angry against him.

His friends in the town of Ephesus, where he had been preaching, who had learned to love him dearly, followed him down to the sea-shore, where he was to go on board the ship, and kissed him while the tears ran down their cheeks, for they never expected to see him again.

Paul had not thought it was necessary to teach the Gentiles all the Jewish laws, though he still observed them himself. The Jews at Jerusalem were very indignant at this, and when Paul reached there they would have killed him if the soldiers had not protected him and allowed him to speak and explain about himself. When the Roman soldiers

found out that he was a free-born Roman, and had special rights on that account, they did not dare to punish him, but let him go.

Forty of the Jews were so angry against Paul that they promised each other not to eat nor drink until they had killed him. The Roman captain learned of this, and sent a strong guard of soldiers to take Paul away to the governor, who was named Felix.

Here he remained a prisoner for two years. It must have been a hard thing for the young Christians in the new churches to feel that this dear friend, who was like a father to them, could no longer help and teach them.

We must remember that at this time the New Testament was not written, and the converts had very little to help them in the new faith.

If Paul had waited a little longer he might have been set free; but he had sent word that, as he had the rights of a Roman, he wished to be sent to be tried at Rome before the emperor.

So he started on his third long journey, this time going as a prisoner, and sailing much farther west than he had ever been before.

Nowadays, on a fast steamer, it would take but a few days to go from Palestine to Rome, but in a little slow sailing-vessel like the one in which Paul went, which was driven about by winds that blew against them, it would take a long time. Before the voyage was half over the little vessel was wrecked

near an island, but all on board were fortunately saved, having swum to shore or floated on planks and pieces of the ship.

A friend who travelled with Paul has written a very interesting account of this exciting event, which came so near ending the life of the great missionary before his work was done.

It was several months before Paul reached the great city of Rome. His friends in Rome heard of his approach, and went out of the city to meet him coming as a prisoner under the guard of soldiers.

There was a little church of Christians in Rome before Paul reached there, and he had already written them a long letter, that is printed in our New Testament, with other letters which he wrote to different churches, which have been preserved. This letter that he had written to his friends at Rome is one of the longest and most important which he wrote. When you are ten years older you will want to study it a great deal ; it is about the noblest and grandest letter ever written.

When Paul saw these friends coming out to meet him on the road, it must have been a great comfort to him to think that in this immense, heathen city full of temples and palaces, and of hard, cruel men who would sometime be glad to see him torn in pieces, he yet knew a few who loved and cared for him and for the Christ whom he had come to preach.

For two years he remained under the guard of a

soldier as a prisoner, but he was kept in a private house and his friends were allowed to come and see him.

There were a number of Jews living in Rome, and he preached Christ to them, but many of them did not believe what he taught. He found generally that the Greeks and Romans and other Gentiles were more ready to become Christians than were the Jews.

Afterwards Paul was probably set free and travelled on farther west, working always for his Master and ready at any moment to die bravely for the truth. We know very little about the last of his life; it is probable that he was put to death very cruelly by order of the Roman emperor named Nero, who was about the worst and most cruel man who ever lived.

The story of Paul's life we learn chiefly from a book called "The Acts of the Apostles"; but from his letters we learn the most that we know about what he thought and preached. He had begun life as a strict Jew, but at last he broke away almost entirely from the old law. He felt that, as a disciple of Christ, he was freed from it. In writing a letter to certain Gentiles, he tells them it was of no consequence for them to follow the law of the Jews; that had been a good thing in the past, for it had helped the world to come to the truth, but now Christ had come there was no longer any need of it. They

ought to serve God now by following Christ and becoming like him, rather than by offering sacrifices and keeping the fast days and Sabbaths as the Jews had done.

Over and over again he begged them to be kind and good and to "bear one another's burdens," and so fulfil the law of Christ, which was far higher than most of the old Jewish laws. All the law, as he taught, amounted simply to this: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Paul not only preached this, but he practised it also. He loved others better than himself. He was often hungry and cold. He was cruelly beaten, he was bound in chains and put into dark dungeons, but although his body suffered, his heart was full of joy because he, like his Master, was to be "made perfect through suffering."

Other men have suffered bravely for the sake of the truth, but since his time, I know of no man that has lived who has been so helpful to the world as this noble Christian hero and martyr whom we have come to call Saint Paul.





CHAPTER XLIII.

THE FIRST CHRISTIANS.

After Jesus had left them, the disciples began to teach and preach as he had commanded. One of the first things they did was to choose another disciple to take the place of Judas, who had felt so badly about the terrible thing which he had done that he had killed himself.

One day, when the twelve were all together, not long after this, the Spirit of God came upon them as it had never come before, and they went out and began preaching with such earnestness that thousands were at once converted.

Peter, who had denied that he knew Jesus, and had afterwards been so bitterly sorry for it, was one of the foremost and boldest of them all.

One day he had a wonderful dream. He was up on the flat roof of the house at noontime, and while waiting for dinner, fell asleep. He dreamed that he saw a great many animals let down out of the sky before him, and a voice told him to kill and eat them. But they were animals which the Jews had been

forbidden to eat, so Peter answered that he could not do it, for they were "common and unclean." Then he seemed to hear a voice answering, and saying, that what God had made clean, he must not think was unclean. This dream made a great impression on Peter. He felt it was meant to teach him that God cared for the Gentiles just as much as for the Jews, and that no class of people should be looked down upon.

Peter came to see what perhaps no Jew before him had ever seen, that in every nation whoever pleased God and did right was accepted by Him.

From that time the apostles began to preach to the Gentiles, and found them generally more ready to listen to them than were the Jews.

Neither Peter nor John nor any of the twelve disciples ever became such a great preacher as St. Paul; he was a larger-minded man than any of them.

At first the Christians at Jerusalem put all their money together, and rich and poor were served alike. They loved each other and showed their love by being kind and unselfish.

Most of them, and Paul also, expected that the end of the world would come before very long; they had understood Jesus to say so. When Paul and James and John wrote the letters to their friends which are translated in our New Testament, they had not the least idea that they would be read eighteen hundred years afterwards.

When we think of the little gatherings of Christians to whom the apostles wrote letters, we must not imagine they were much like our Christian churches. They had no such buildings, nor ministers, and each of them had only a very little part of the New Testament, for it was not yet all written.

After all the different books were written, they were not put together as they are now for a long time. At first, many other writings were put in with them, but finally those which seemed the best and most important were selected from the great number of writings, although there was a great deal of quarrelling and difference of opinion about it for hundreds of years.

After the apostles had died, the good work went on and their teaching spread, though at first very slowly.

The Roman emperors thought the Christians were a troublesome people, and for a long time they were persecuted so that they had to flee for their lives.

At Rome there were underground passages like those in mines, called Catacombs, which had been used for burying the dead. Sometimes the passages were very narrow, and sometimes they spread out into good-sized rooms. Here many Christians took refuge, and when they were not allowed to gather together and pray in their own homes, they fled down to this place of safety, where by the dim light of torches and lamps, they could talk freely and pray and sing praises to God.

They tried to make these dismal places as much like a place of worship as they could, and they painted the walls with pictures of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, and many other cheerful, pleasant pictures, which were a comfort to them.

They buried their dead in the catacombs, and the place became very dear to them, for the bodies of many saints and martyrs were laid here. A place for the body was cut out of the side of a passageway, and after it was laid within, the opening was tightly closed by a slab of stone, on which was often written in Latin words, “Peace be with thee.”

It was the custom of the Roman people to amuse themselves by great bloody contests between men and beasts, in which the more suffering and cruelty there was, the better they were pleased.

Thousands of them used to meet in a great building called the Coliseum, part of which is still standing. They sat in circles around an open place in the centre, very much as you may have seen people at a circus.

Even women and children went to see these shocking sights, and laughed with glee at seeing a poor human being fighting for his life with a fierce lion or hungry tiger. Many prisoners were put to death in this way, and their screams of agony were like pleasant music to the heartless throng who looked down upon them.

Many Christians, even tender young girls among

them, were led out to be tortured and torn in pieces for the amusement of the people. They died calmly and bravely, and, like St. Paul, were glad they were considered worthy to suffer for Christ's sake.

But at last people began to be convinced that there was something in this new religion which was better than any thing they had known. When their friends died and left them sad and alone, they longed to have the same comfort and happiness which they saw the Christians feel when they laid their dead away. So little by little the number of the Christians grew, and the worship of the gods became less, until finally the Christians were in power.

Very curious ideas, which were not at all like the teachings of Jesus, were believed by many Christians. The Romans and Greeks had paid a great deal of attention to bathing and exercising and making their bodies clean and beautiful. They had cared a great deal about good food and fine houses filled with every thing for their comfort, and temples full of beautiful statues.

Many Christians felt that all these things were a great hindrance to the life of the spirit, and the only safe way to do was to despise their bodies and think as little about them as possible. Some of them went months, and even years, without bathing; they went away by themselves and lived in caves and desert places, and ate no meat, and sometimes fasted for days together.

They thought a great deal about death, and often kept a skull before them in order to remind them that they must soon die. They did not marry or make any friends, for fear that they should be tempted to forget God, by giving their thoughts to worldly things.

They hated the statues of gods and goddesses which adorned the temples and had been made by the greatest artists of the world. They cared nothing for beauty, for the more beautiful these statues made the human body appear, the more dangerous they thought them to be, and were often glad to throw them down and to crush them in pieces.

All this seems very strange and foolish to us now, but it was perfectly natural that under the circumstances they should think as they did, and should hate every thing which reminded them of the heathenism of those who had been so cruel to most of them.

Like many other people who have lived since then, they were partly right and partly wrong ; they could see only one side of the truth, but after all, it was the most important side which they saw ; it was, that the inner life of the soul is the real life, and if that is only beautiful, it makes less difference if the body be poor and weak.

The great mistake which they made was to think that they could please God best by running away from their fellow-men, instead of staying in the world

and trying to make it better, and also in imagining that God wished to have them give up their natural love for their friends and homes.

We shall never love God more by loving his children less. As Saint John wrote in one of his letters : "This commandment have we, that he who loveth God, love his brother also."

As time went on and the Romans became Christians they did things that were never thought of in the time of the apostles, and had many ideas which were quite different from those that the apostles held.

The disciples had baptized new converts, as John the Baptist had done before them. This was a sign that they had begun to lead a new life, and were washed clean from the stains of sin.

It was a very simple, natural way of showing a great truth by an outward sign, just as a flag, which is nothing important in itself, stands as the sign of a nation, and men in battle will follow the flag, and die to save it, because, though it is nothing but a piece of cloth itself, it stands for what is very dear and precious.

As time went on, the most superstitious and dreadful ideas began to be connected with this simple act of bathing the body in water as a sign that, as the body was made clean, so the soul also was washed pure and white.

It was more convenient to sprinkle a little water

on the head than to dip the whole body in, and so after a while this was generally done, and of course answered just as well as a sign of the truth for which it stood. Just as a flag, whether it be large or small, or made of silk or cotton, is a real flag and always means the same thing. But the dreadful things of which I spoke were, that people came to think that the sign itself was important, and finally it was believed that no one, not even little babies, could be saved unless they were baptized.

In the same way, in regard to the Lord's Supper, which the disciples kept in memory of the last supper which they had eaten with Jesus, there grew up very strange and false ideas. At first it was a very simple thing. The friends of Jesus met together at some private house and ate a supper of bread and fish, and drank wine mixed with water, and thought and talked about their dear Master whom they loved.

But years after, when the apostles were dead, and the simple way of eating this supper was given up, it came to have a very different meaning. I have not time to tell you of the strange and foolish notions which people held about it, and of the fighting and quarrelling and hating which came when Christians no longer had the spirit of brotherly love which Jesus taught.

They made the same mistake the Jews had made so many times, in spite of what the prophets had told them, in supposing that if they only went

through certain religious forms and ceremonies in a particular way, they would please God.

After it had been pretty well settled as to what books should be selected as the sacred ones which were to have authority, there was a great deal of difference of opinion as to what people ought to believe about many religious questions, for they did not all understand the New Testament in the same way.

There were bishops, who were men having more authority than ordinary preachers, and these bishops and the leading men of the church met in a great council and decided on a certain creed, or statement of belief. This creed finally came to be thought just as true and important as the words of Jesus himself.

In later times there were other creeds written. In our time there are many. Each church has its own. They all begin with the words "I believe." Perhaps the best known which has come down from a very early time is the Apostles' Creed. No one knows who wrote it; it was not by the apostles, we are sure.

At the time when the Christians had been persecuted they were all of them very brave and noble, for no one, who had not been true of heart, would have chosen the hard life which they had to live.

But several hundred years later, when they were in power, and the rich people were all on their side,

it was very different, and it could no longer be said, as it was in the beginning: "See how those Christians love one another!"

The bishop of Rome finally became very powerful, and was made the head bishop of all and called Pope, which means papa or father.

Then for some four or five hundred years came a time which has been called the "Dark Ages," because the world was full of ignorance and bloodshed, and the nations which have since become so great were but just beginning to feel their way towards the light and liberty which they now enjoy.

Although every one called himself a Christian, scarcely any one seemed to really know him who was the "Light of the World."





CHAPTER XLIV.

THE WORLD MOVES.

ABOUT six hundred years after Jesus was born, in a country called Arabia, which was near Palestine, there lived a man named Mohammed, who founded a religion which is now believed by many millions of men.

He believed in Abraham and Moses, and thought Jesus was a great prophet, but he believed in himself more than in any one else. He taught a queer mixture of what is false and true. One of the best things about his teachings was that men should not drink liquors or gamble; one of the worst things was that he did not respect women as he ought, and allowed his followers to have several wives.

The religious book of the Mohammedans, which is their Bible, is called the Koran.

Mohammed and his followers did not convert people simply by loving them and telling them the truth as Paul did, but they often commanded Jews and Christians to become Mohammedans, and made war upon them if they did not. A great many people yielded to them rather than suffer death.



MOHAMMED.

After a while they went into Palestine and took the city of Jerusalem. From all over the world many religious people travelled to Jerusalem, because they thought they could come nearer to God and grow more holy by going on the long, tiresome journey over land and sea and standing on the very spot where Jesus and the apostles had lived.

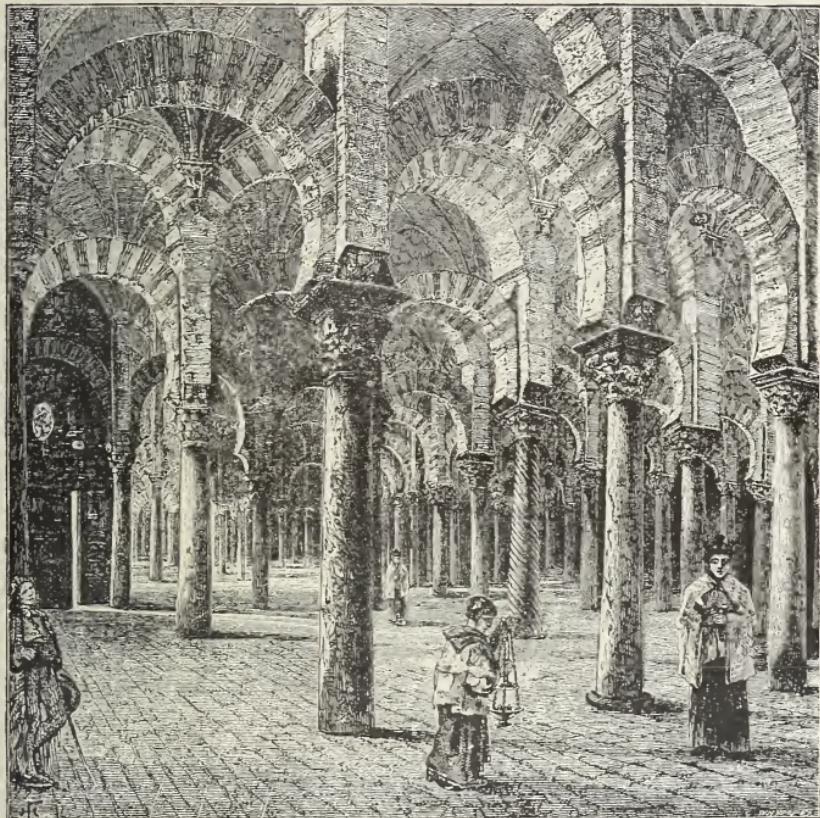
After the Mohammedans took Jerusalem, Christians were not allowed to come except by paying for the privilege, and they were often treated shamefully and abused.

At last, the Christians in France and England became so indignant at this, they determined to put a stop to it, and to punish these followers of Mohammed, who they thought was a false prophet and a very wicked man.

The Pope urged the people on, and hundreds of thousands gladly set out to make war against them. This was about eight hundred years ago ; it was more than one thousand years after Christ, and about five hundred years after Mohammed.

There were several wars carried on by the Christians with the hope of getting possession of Jerusalem, which had become as dear to them as it ever was to the Jews. They had to travel more than two thousand miles from home, to go among people whose language they did not know, and they suffered many hardships. Thousands died even before reaching there.

These long journeys were called "Crusades." There was one crusade of children, but of course the poor little things could not fight, and most of them died on the way. Although the Christians did get



MOSQUE IN SPAIN.

possession of Jerusalem, they lost it again, and since then the Mohammedans have held it the most of the time, and have built their churches, which are called mosques, on all the places which are considered most sacred.

Never did any heathen show themselves more foolish and superstitious than did many Christians at this time, and for hundreds of years after, until printing was invented and people began to be better educated.

They valued as their most precious treasures any thing that Jesus or any of the saints or martyrs had ever seen or touched.

They built magnificent churches, in which were caskets or shrines set with gold and jewels, in which were kept what was supposed to be bones, teeth, and locks of hair from their bodies. Little splinters of wood which were believed to have come from the very cross on which Jesus had been crucified, were especially valued.

Many very religious people made long journeys to these places imagining that they would receive a special blessing for doing so.

Very few people had the New Testament or knew any thing about the real teachings of Jesus and Paul.

The Pope was now become very great and powerful. Kings and queens feared him and often did not dare to disobey him, lest he should punish them by turning them out of the church; this they dreaded very much, for it was believed that any one who did not belong to the church would lose his soul and suffer forever.

Little babies were generally baptized about as soon as they were born, in order that they might be saved from hell if they should die.

Almost the only people who had any learning were the priests and monks. These men were obliged to promise never to marry. Some of them gave up their whole lives to studying and writing; others went about doing good among the poor, choosing to live in a very humble way themselves, even going barefoot and begging from door to door for their food.

The best of these men, after they had died, were called saints; churches were named after them, and people even prayed to them, thinking that God would hear them better if some holy saint spoke to Him for them.

Two of the noblest and best of these men were named St. Francis and St. Bernard. There is a beautiful Latin poem about heaven which was written by St. Bernard, which some time you will read and come to love very much.

Many monks were not at all unselfish and kind, but lived a lazy, easy life and did nothing to make the world any better. The common people were obliged to pay for the support of these men as they never earned any money themselves, and they also gave vast sums of money to build great cathedrals. As people had no newspapers, nor books, nor lectures, nor photographs, nor pictures, in their houses, and very little that was beautiful or interesting, they loved to go to the church which was open not only on Sundays, but all the time. There they learned

the stories of the saints and apostles from the statues and paintings and the beautiful colored windows.

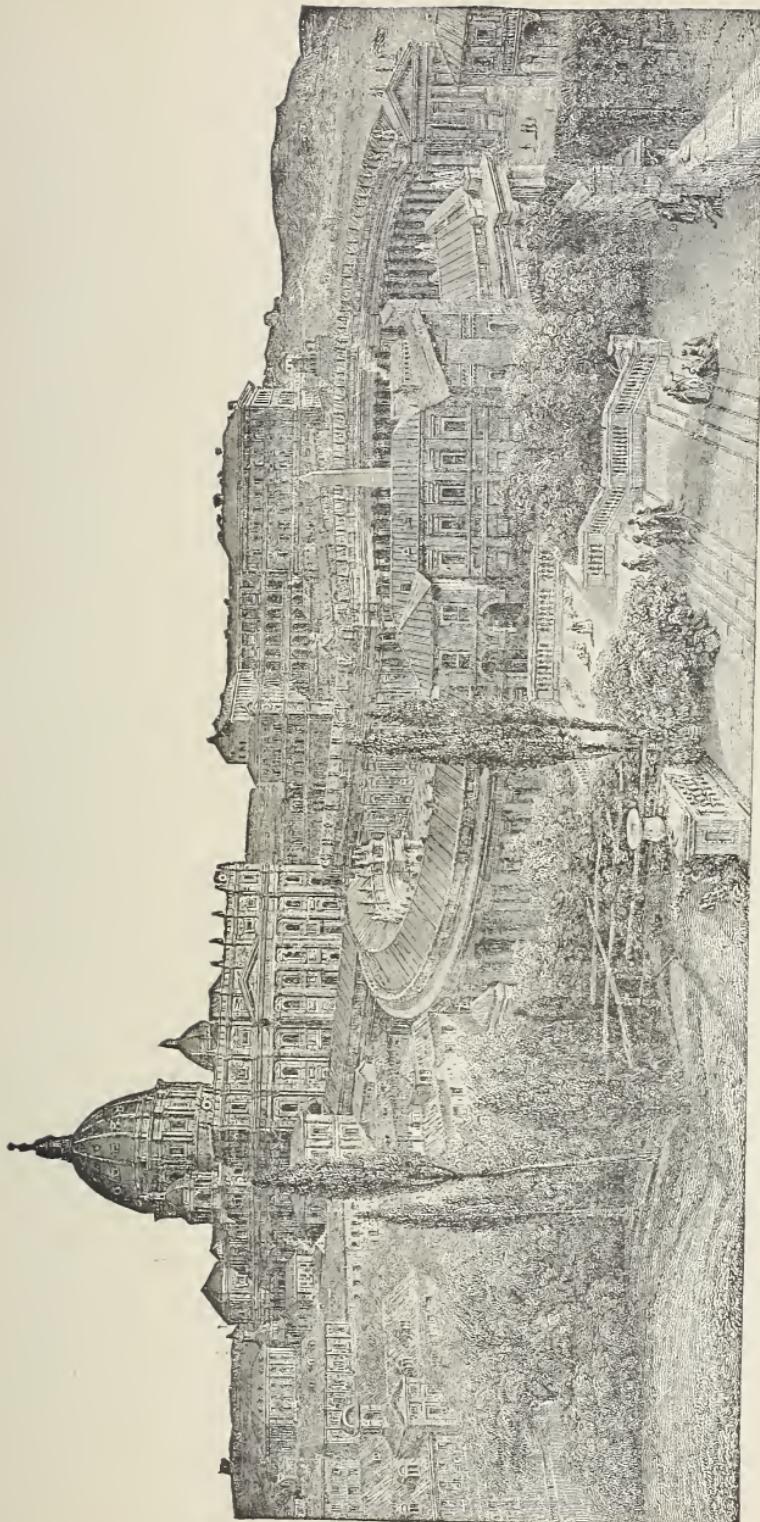
The grandest pictures which were ever painted were made for the churches. Two famous men named Michael Angelo and Raphael painted such wonderful pictures that now it would take a fortune to buy one of them. Their names are honored and loved while the names of the lords and dukes of their time are almost forgotten.

I presume, however, you would not enjoy seeing their pictures until you have learned more about them. You remember I once told you that few people like the best things at first. In pictures, books, music, and every thing else, we must always expect to enjoy many things by and by which now do not interest us.

During all these years, the Jews, who had been driven from Palestine, settled in all the cities of Europe. They were a great people; most of them were in the trading or banking business, and many of them grew very rich. They kept up their Jewish religion and customs, and lived by themselves in little, narrow, crowded streets.

The Christians hated them, and would have nothing to do with them. I mean those who called themselves Christians, for, as you will see, there were very few who followed Christ's teaching about loving their neighbors.

The heathen emperor Nero never was more cruel



ST. PETER'S AND THE POPE'S PALACE AT ROME.
(Containing Raphael's and Michael Angelo's famous pictures.)

to the early Christians, than were the Christians to the Jews at a later time.

Sometimes they drove them out of their country, and stole their lands and houses. They told lies about them, sometimes saying that the Jews killed Christian children, and poisoned wells. This made ignorant people so furious against them that they killed and burnt alive thousands and thousands of them.

This happened over and over again, and many Jews showed themselves to be as brave and noble martyrs as any Christians ever were.

It was not until our own time, eighteen hundred years since Jesus came to teach us to love one another, that Christian nations gave equal privileges to that race to which all the prophets and Christ himself belonged.

The church, that is the Pope and bishops, and those in power, were very severe against any one who taught any thing opposed to their teachings. They felt it must surely be dangerous. They did not dare to let people think for themselves, lest they should think what was wrong.

When any one taught what they considered wrong, they called it "heresy," and the man himself a "heretic."

A wise man named Galileo studied and made experiments and discovered many new things. Among other things, he taught that the earth moves, which

most persons did not believe. This was called "heresy," and Galileo was put into prison and frightened into saying that he did not believe it after all.

It seems very strange that it ever could be thought wicked to believe such a thing as this, yet it is true that no great new thought has ever been taught, but men first hated and fought against it.

Yes, the world was moving, and in more ways than one. The thoughts of men could not be kept silent forever; there were fearless men, who dared to think, and were not to be frightened like Galileo into denying what they knew was true, and now that the invention of printing had been made, it was easier for new ideas to spread.

To be sure, many books were forbidden to be printed, and were taken and burned if they did get printed; few people knew how to read, even if they had a good book, but in spite of all this, a great change was beginning to come over the world, and after many hundred years, when it had seemed in some respects to be going backwards instead of forwards, there came a time when superstition and cruelty began to give way, because men came to do more thinking and less hating.



CHAPTER XLV.

THE REFORMATION, AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

YOU will see from what I have told you that the great trouble had always been that most persons, even those who were good, had very little idea of what God really wanted them to do, any more than those Christian hermits had, of whom I have told you.

People had made the strange mistake of supposing they must believe what the church taught, without daring to think or reason for themselves; they thought that men and women who did not marry, who ate very little, who beat themselves, said long prayers, and made themselves very uncomfortable, were more holy than those who lived a natural life and used their minds which God had given them in thinking out new truths.

At last there was born a man who helped people to see the truth about all this. It came about in this way.

The Pope and great men of the church lived like princes and wanted a great deal of money to make

their palaces and churches very splendid. Sometimes it was got by imposing shamefully on the common, ignorant people.

At one time the Pope's agent offered to save people from future punishment for sin, if they would pay money to help him build a great church at Rome.



LUTHER BURNING THE POPE'S BULL.

There was a good, honest German monk, named Martin Luther, who thought it a fearful thing for any man, even if he were the head of the church, to offer to do this, when only God can do it, and not even He, unless men are sorry for their sins.

So he spoke out boldly, and said what he thought about it. You have no idea what courage it took in those days to dare to say any thing which could be called "heresy."

Very often men and women had to suffer as cruelly as the first Christian martyrs did, simply because they dared to think for themselves and say what they thought.

Luther became a great leader and reformer, and did more than any one to bring about that great change in the minds of people, of which I spoke, and which was called the Reformation.

I wish I had time to tell you the wonderful story of the life of this great man, to whom you and I owe so much. He loved music and children, and you must some time get your mamma to read to you the charming letters which he wrote to his own children. For after a while he freed himself from the rules of the church, and was no longer a monk, but married and had children of his own.

As by this time printing had been invented, and as Luther translated the Bible into the language of his people, those who followed him and were called Lutherans took that for their guide, instead of the teachings of the church.

The Bible was now read for the first time by even the poorest people, for every one could afford to have one.

Those who broke away from the old church were

called Protestants. That is what we call ourselves, and those who remained were called Roman Catholics.

The Protestants did not preach a new religion. They tried to go back to the old belief which had been held by the church at first, before many of the later ideas, such as believing in the power of the Pope, and praying to saints, had crept in.

Another great man who was a leader in the Reformation was a Frenchman named Calvin. Many of the people who lived in our country in your grandpapa's time were Calvinists.

Although Luther and Calvin were great and good men, they said very bitter, harsh things against those Protestants who did not think as they did, and Calvin even consented to have a man burned alive because he persisted in saying what was held to be wrong.

When you come to read the whole story of these times, you will find that whoever had the power in his hands, whether he were heathen or Christian, Roman Catholic or Protestant, always tried to force other people to believe what he himself thought was right. I dare not tell you much about the fearful injustice and cruelty, of the shooting, and torturing, and burning, which for hundreds and hundreds of years went on wherever any one dared to think differently from those who were in power.

It is so dreadful that one could hardly think of it long without having a nightmare.

Each one of us all owes a great debt to all these men who through the ages have dared to think and tell their thoughts, even if it cost their lives. We should never have been free and happy if it had not been for them. The world would never have grown any wiser and better if men and women had chosen easy, pleasant lives, and there would have been few great thoughts for me to tell you little thinkers.

When I was a little girl and went to my church, and passed by the different churches and Sunday-schools where many other children went, I used to wonder what was the difference between them all. I felt very sure that none of the people in them could think quite right, because I thought there was only one right kind of church, and that was the one to which I went.

I imagine some of you think the same way, and would like to know what makes the difference in all these churches which are called Protestant. Why is there only one kind of a Roman Catholic church and so many different kinds of Protestant churches?

The reason is this. People have different minds, and do not always understand the very same words and ideas in at all the same way. The best of people sometimes disagree about a subject. So, after the Reformation, although the Bible was considered the guide for all Protestants, yet, as people began to think for themselves, they soon found there was going to be a difference of opinion about many

things, though never so much difference as between Protestants and Roman Catholics.

The different kinds of Protestant churches did not all start at once. In England, the country from which our people came, the church was more like the Roman Catholic than any of the other churches which came afterwards. It was just about the same as what we call the Episcopal Church.

The king was at the head of it, and all the people in the country were expected to belong to it. They turned the beautiful cathedrals into Protestant churches. They no longer prayed to saints or said Latin prayers which they did not understand.

They used a prayer-book in their service, and also had beautiful music. When boys and girls were about fourteen years old they were confirmed by the bishop, who put his hands on their heads, while they repeated the promises which had been made for them when they had been baptized in their babyhood. After that they were allowed to go to the communion, or Lord's supper.

There were many things about this great English church, which some thoughtful people did not at all like. They did not believe that any minister ought to be obliged to use a prayer-book and pray what other men had written instead of using his own words. They thought there were many other things in the English Church which were altogether too much like the Roman Catholic Church, which they feared and hated.

After a great deal of trouble and persecution, which, however, was not quite so terrible as what the first Protestants endured, they were finally allowed to leave the Church of England and have little congregations of their own, where they could preach what they pleased.

The people who left the English Church were called Dissenters; but in America, where the government has nothing to do with the church, and all religions are treated in the same way, we do not speak of Dissenters.

There were different divisions among these Dissenters. Some of them were called Presbyterians. They had no bishops, but were governed by men whom they chose from among themselves.

They had no prayer-book in their service, and many of them in those days did not believe it right to have any organ in church or to sing any thing but psalms.

Most of them were very strict indeed about keeping Sunday in much the same way as the Jews in Christ's time had kept the Sabbath. No one was allowed to take a walk or do many simple, harmless things which both Luther and Calvin had thought quite proper to do on Sunday.

Other Dissenters were called Baptists, because they felt very strongly about the importance of baptizing only those who were old enough to unite with the church, instead of baptizing babies as was

done in the other churches ; and they especially thought it important, that when any one was baptized he should be covered all over with water, as was probably the custom in the early time, instead of having a few drops sprinkled on the forehead.

It seems strange now that any persons could care so much about such unimportant things, and yet many were willing to suffer and die rather than give up these ideas ; it seems stranger still that any one could ever have tried to punish them for such a harmless belief.

Other Dissenters were men and women who believed about as the Presbyterians did, except they thought that each congregation ought to manage its own affairs, and choose its own ministers, and that there should be no bishops or councils of outside persons who should interfere or have any power over them. These people were called Congregationalists.

For a long time all these Dissenters so hated every thing which reminded them of the superstitions of the Roman Catholics, that they would not have any pictures of the saints nor of Mary with the child Jesus in their houses, and they would not observe Christmas and Easter, nor allow a carving of a cross on any of their churches.

All this has changed very much now, as you know. People in different churches are coming to love each other much better than they used to, and think much less about their little differences.

One of the most important of the Protestant churches, which began much later than any of the others, is the Methodist.

Two brothers, named John and Charles Wesley, who lived about one hundred and fifty years ago, began to preach to poor, working people, and finally, though they did not at first intend it, there grew out of their preaching a new religious body which was called Methodist and was a little different from any other. There are now more Methodists in our country than any other kind of Protestants. They have done a great deal of good, especially among poor and ignorant people. A peculiar custom which they have is for each church to change its minister once in every three years.

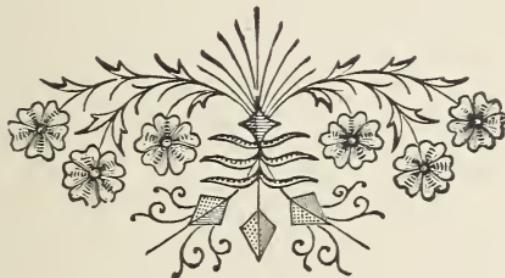
There are several other kinds of Protestant churches having fewer people belonging to them than those of which I have told you. There are good, noble Christians in them all.

I hope when you are older that each one of you will want to join with some one of them. For, as you know, when people are loving and working for the same thing, they can do much more when they work heartily together.

There has never yet been any kind of church which taught all the truth there is to know. So whatever we may come to believe ourselves, we must always be willing to listen to good people who see things differently from us.

Men and women are no longer burned or put into prison, but they are often called hard names, and thought to be wicked, because they do not believe as other good persons do.

Probably the time will never come when all wise persons will think just alike, but I think there is a good time coming when all good people will trust each other, and be glad to learn from each other. You and I must each try to do a little to help that time to come soon.





CHAPTER XLVI.

THOUGHTS ABOUT EVERY-DAY LIFE; OR, TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR YOU AND ME.

YOU remember in one of the chapters about the old Hebrew law-giver, Moses, I told of the ten famous laws that he gave his people. These contained the truths which it was most important for those people to know then, but while those laws lie at the foundation of all good living, there are other things also which it is well for us to think of.

I have written some of these thoughts in the form of ten new laws, and some of these you will see, if you look sharply, are very much like some of those which Moses wrote, only they mean not merely what he meant, but something more also. Here they are :

1. Obey whatever is right.
2. Always speak the truth.
3. Be honest.
4. Be faithful.
5. Be pure.
6. Be temperate.
7. Be modest.

8. Be thoughtful.
9. Love your Country.
10. Lend a hand.

I want to tell you something about each one of these, and we will begin with the first one.

When a little baby is born, it knows less than any animal ; a kitten or puppy only three weeks old can do many things which a baby cannot do until he is two years old.

A chicken only a month old knows almost as much then as it ever will learn, and a fly only a day old knows nearly as much as its mother. We find among all animals that the shorter their lives are to be, the sooner they become able to take care of themselves, and they learn all they ever can know very soon after they begin to live ; while the longer their lives are to be, the less they know when they are born.

Perhaps you do not see what all this has to do with obeying, but it has much to do with it as you will discover.

Human beings live longer than most kinds of animals, and, as I have said already, they come to know infinitely more and are of a great deal more consequence than animals, because they are immortal souls and are children of God.

Now the greatest man that ever lived began life as the most helpless creature that ever was made. A new-born baby does not know enough to look

away from the bright gas-light which makes its little eyes ache ; it cannot tell its mother's voice from the creaking of a door, and it knows nothing at first but how to eat. I once knew a baby old enough to be put up to a table in a chair where, as it happened, a candle was within her reach, and she put her finger into the flame. It burned her terribly, but she did not know what was hurting her, and although she cried and screamed she did not take her finger away from the candle until some one rushed and caught her, and although that was over twenty years ago, the scar is on her finger still.

A kitten would have known more than the baby did.

One reason why little cats and dogs and chickens know more than babies do is that they would die if they could not sooner learn to take care of themselves ; but God has given every baby a mother to take care of it ; so, although it is so helpless it does not die, for it has kind care for many years until it is able to do for itself.

If babies did not have this tender mother's care, they would surely die at once.

Even among wild, savage people children do not become able to take care of themselves until they have lived eight or ten years, at least, and among people like ourselves, where every one must know a great deal before he can get a living, it takes longer.

If a boy wishes to be well fitted for the work of

the world, it will take him nearly twenty years to get ready for it. During all this time he must be taken care of, and have nearly all his food, and clothes, and every thing given to him.

It is not possible for little folks to have any idea of the care and trouble and thought which all mothers and fathers take, in order to make their children grow strong and healthy and wise and good. When I was a little girl I never dreamed how much my mother planned and worked for me.

I knew I ought to mind her, and I supposed the reason was that the Bible teaches children to be obedient; but even if the Bible said nothing about it, it would be just as true, and you can easily see this for yourself. If mothers and fathers have helpless, ignorant, little children, and if they spend a great deal of money and time on them and take care of them and teach them, the very least thing that loving little children can do is to obey and do just as they are told to do. Of course you all know this well enough, but I am afraid you have never stopped to think much about it, and have no idea how ungrateful a thing it is not to do exactly as your father and mother and teacher bid you.

Doubtless some of you little folks think grown people never have to obey, but can do just as they please: now that is a great mistake. We older ones are punished just as truly as you are if we do wrong.

There are a great many kinds of laws which grown

people have to mind. First, there are the laws of health. We are so made that if we live rightly we are pretty sure to keep well, but if we break these laws by eating too much, or eating things which are bad for us, or sitting up too late, or wearing our clothes too tight or too thin, we shall suffer for it.

Then there are the laws of our country which men must obey, or else they will be punished by being put into prison. Besides this, there are all God's laws which must be obeyed.

If a man is selfish and breaks the law of love, he will be punished by finding he has no friends, that no one loves him, and he can never have any real, true happiness.

You can see, if you think about it a little, that if any one wishes to be happy he must learn to obey: first he must obey his parents and teachers and so learn from them what is right and what is wrong, and when he is grown up he must obey his conscience.

I never yet knew of a bad man or woman who had learned to obey in the right way when a child. I have put this at the beginning of these rules for being good, because I think it is the first and most important thing for every one to think of.

I have just read what I have written to a little girl nine years old, and was surprised to find that a great many ideas in this chapter were quite new to her. At first she could hardly believe that it would be wrong to disobey, if the Bible did not forbid it.

So I told her how in many nations, like the Chinese, where the Bible has never been known, children are taught first of all the duty which they owe to their parents. Every one is obliged to be very respectful and obedient, and is severely punished and disgraced if he is not so.

Nothing is more plainly written in all nature than this law of obedience; it goes down to the very depths of our own lives, and until we learn to live by it, we are of very little use in the world.

Perhaps you will think I need not say any thing about the second law, for of course even the smallest child knows that it is a dreadful thing to tell a lie. But although we do not meet many people who tell real lies, we find very few who always try to speak the exact truth *in all things*, so I want to say a word about it.

One of the commonest ways in which grown people say what is not true is when they say what they do not mean in order to seem friendly and polite to company. This is very foolish as well as wrong, for as soon as people find out that it is their custom to flatter and compliment every one, they begin to suspect them of not being in earnest even when they do really mean what they say.

One of the commonest ways in which children do not speak the truth in all things is in making promises which they do not take any pains to keep.

Did you ever hear the story of the brave old Ro-

man, Regulus? He had been taken prisoner by the enemy in time of war and was allowed to go back to Rome on condition that he would promise to positively return. He went home, and it is said that instead of advising his countrymen to make peace with the enemy he urged them to fight even more bitterly, and then, instead of staying at home and saving his life, as it was quite easy to do, he returned to his captors and died by dreadful tortures which he knew he must expect if he kept his word. Regulus had never heard of the Ten Commandments, but he did not need any written law to tell him what was written in his own heart, that truth and honor are more precious than life.

Another way of not telling the exact truth, perhaps the most common way of all, is in what we call "exaggeration" or telling "large stories." Most children are very fond of doing this. They want to make it appear that something very wonderful has happened to them, and so they say "it was perfectly elegant," or "awfully mean," or "the most horrid thing" they ever saw in their lives. Now, there are not many things which truly are "perfectly elegant," and very few things, except tornadoes and fierce wild beasts and such things, which are really "horrid"; so to use such expressions a great many times a day about commonplace things is very foolish, although it does not deceive any one, for we all understand that it means nothing.

But our word should mean something; and if we do not take pains to tell what we have seen and heard just as it is, if we care so much to attract people's interest in what we are saying as to make the story larger than it is, we have gone a long way towards breaking one of the most important of all these new commandments.

Perhaps the one which is the hardest of all to keep, is the one about being faithful. This word has two meanings: sometimes it means to be true and loyal to any thing that we believe, or to any one whom we love. People who are very changeable in their feelings and easily forget what they have once cared for, make very unfaithful friends. When we speak of any one being unfaithful about his work, the word has a little different meaning. An unfaithful child is a careless one who cannot be trusted to do his work well when he is not being watched, and who thinks it too much trouble to be exact and particular about little things.

But we know that it is only by being "faithful over a few things," as Jesus said, that we are ever going to be fit to do great things.

I think the most blessed thing which could be said of any one of us when the end of this earthly part of our life shall come, is the "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." To look back on a life in which every little duty had been done, no matter how hard and tiresome it was, and to know that we

had been faithful and true to the best that we knew, why that would be the sweetest thought that could come to us. It would be heaven itself.

Jesus said that "the pure in heart are blessed, for they shall see God." Yes, and it is only the pure in heart who ever *can* see God.

We speak of our minds being "pure," just as we speak of our hands being clean ; that is, we mean that no vile words or foul thoughts have stained our minds, just as no dirt has soiled our hands. There is one great difference, however, between the two things. We can easily wash our hands clean, and even if there are ink stains on them they will come off in a few days, but until the last day of your life, you will never be able to get out of your mind the nasty thoughts and words which you may have once let into it. If any boy or girl wants to whisper secrets to you which you would be ashamed to talk about with your mother, run away as you would run from some one who was trying to give you poison.

There are many things in this wonderful life of ours which are so sacred that to speak or think of them thoughtlessly and irreverently is very wrong. If we would have our minds clean and sweet, as well as our bodies, we must see to it that we fill them with good, happy thoughts, and leave no room for any others to creep in.

When I say, "be temperate," perhaps you think I mean, "do not drink any wine or beer." Yes, I

mean that, and I mean a great deal more than that also. Being temperate means being moderate, not going too far. Now for children to drink liquors at all would be going too far, and I suppose none of you have any temptation to do that at present. The temptation to be intemperate for you comes in quite another way.

Drinking coffee or tea, or any thing stronger than chocolate or lemonade or milk is bad for children. Eating rich pastry and much candy, sitting up late at night, and all such things which injure the body, are those in which children generally are intemperate. All kinds of extravagance in using too strong language, in dressing too richly, in spending more money than one can afford,—in fact, going too far in any direction, is being intemperate, and leads to a great many worse things.

To be modest is a thing which is particularly hard for American boys and girls, because, in this country, in the last few years, children have been allowed to talk so much before older people and to tell what they think, that they find it very hard to remember their opinion is not worth so much as that of those who are older and wiser. It used to be thought a very dreadful thing for a boy to rush into a room before his mother and take the best chair, or for a little girl to interrupt and contradict; but we see so much of these rude ways among our bright boys and girls nowadays, that it makes one feel doubly glad when one finds a really modest child.

There is one kind of modesty, however, which we sometimes see, which is a sham modesty, and is worse than none. That is when people talk about their own things in such a way as to try to get a compliment. "My writing-book looks dreadfully, I know I shall get a low mark," says one little girl, who knows she is a good writer, and who says this in order to hear her friend's reply: "No, indeed, yours is a great deal better than mine."

When I say "be thoughtful," of course you know I do not mean to have you sober and quiet all the time. That would be dismal indeed. No, I simply mean to say that neither you nor I can get on in this world, or any other world, unless we do a good deal of thinking and learn to think aright. Some persons find it easy to think about the little things in their every-day life, but hard to think about the larger life outside their own little circle in which they have a share.

Others find this easy, but are careless and forgetful about the little things which we cannot afford to forget if we want to have our life go smoothly without any trouble to other people.

You see we must learn to think in both directions, and we must not forget that merely wishing to do the right thing will amount to nothing, unless we take the pains to think, for

"Evil is wrought, by want of thought
As well as want of heart."



CHAPTER XLVII.

LAST THOUGHTS.

I WANT to give a whole chapter to the last two of those ten thoughts of which I have just told you, because they are the very two which I am sure you never thought much about. I am ashamed to say I never thought much about loving my country until I was twice as old as some of you are. It is a very strange thing that most people, even those who are grown up and ought to know better, never realize that next to God they owe more to their country than to any person or any thing in the whole world.

“What?” you ask, “do I owe more than to mamma and papa, who give me food and clothes and everything? I don’t see that our country gives me anything.”

Now let us see. Suppose that you lived in a land where there was no government and had never been one, and all the people were wild savages, and had always been so. What could your father and mother do for you?

They could give you coarse food, which you would eat with your fingers, sitting on the ground with the others around a camp-fire. They could teach you to swim and hunt and fish, and your mother could make you one suit of clothes a year out of the skins of the animals which your father had killed.

She might love you very much, but she could do little more for you than that; and if you were a little girl she would teach you to carry burdens, to do all the dirty work of the camp, to wait on your brother, and to remember that as you were a girl you must not think yourself of half so much importance as he was.

Now if you had no father or mother living, and yet you were in a country like ours, although you might be a poor, forlorn little creature living in a poorhouse or orphan asylum, you would hardly be so badly off as a little savage child who never would have a chance to know any thing, and who would very likely be some day murdered in a fight between the tribes of wild men.

Let us see what a country like ours does for us. In the first place, by means of the laws and the courts and the officers who carry out the laws, it is made a very safe place for us to live in, and children and all weak persons are usually well protected. In a savage country the strong can injure the weak as much as they please, and there is no way to hinder or punish them.

There are many countries also which are not savage, but have governments of a poor kind, where the poor and weak get very little help, and millions of children are allowed to grow up without learning to read.

But in our country there are few children born who do not have some chance to learn, and in many cities children can go to school ten months in the year for twelve or fifteen years, can have pleasant, warm rooms, plenty of books and pictures, good teachers, and all for *nothing*.

It seems to me a very thoughtless thing for any child who has all this given him to forget that this is a gift for which he owes something in return. He owes it to the city to be careful not to scratch, or break, or tear any of the things in the school-house, and to study and learn all he can, so as to pay the city by becoming, as we say, a "good citizen."

The city does a great many other things for us. It builds waterworks and lays pipes and sends water into every house, so that by paying a very little money we can have all the water we want, and do not have to go to the great trouble of digging our own wells and pumping up our own water. The city gives us street lights, so that it is not so unsafe for people to walk about at night as it used to be in old times when the streets were all dark. It pays the firemen to hurry to our houses to put out the fire if one should start; it paves the streets, and does a

thousand things to make us comfortable and happy, which I do not believe you ever thought of.

One great blessing which comes from living in this United States is that we do not have a large army. There are very few soldiers, and, while other countries are becoming poorer on account of the great number of soldiers which they must support all the time, our country is growing richer. And what is best of all is that the fathers and brothers do not have to go off to the army, but can stay at home, for the whole land is at peace.

There is another thing about our country, which I suppose I hardly need to tell you, and this is that every man, black or white, rich or poor, can vote. In some lands only the rich, the nobles, and the royal family, have any thing to say about how the country shall be governed. The poor, common people must fight and do what they are told to do, whether they want to or not. But in the United States every poor man may have something to say about the government, and more than one poor, barefoot boy, who lived in a log cabin, has come to be a President when he was a man.

There is no country in the whole world where every one can be so free and so happy, and have so good a chance to improve in every way, as right here in our own dear land.

But, in spite of this, very few people are grateful enough for these blessings, and most men are too

thoughtless or selfish to be willing to take much trouble to see that the laws are kept good, and that bad and ignorant men shall not be elected.

It is because I want you to grow up with a very different feeling about this, that I have written as one of the most important commands: "Love your country." You cannot love it if you do not know something about it, so I hope you will begin to learn all you can about it, and of the great and noble men who have lived here, from the brave old Pilgrim Fathers down to the great poets and soldiers of our own time.

We belong to the whole human race, and we owe that a debt, too, as well as our country.

Let us see how. Suppose no one had ever lived before, and we were the very first persons to live on the earth. And suppose that we had to begin to find out for ourselves all the things which people have learned in the last ten thousand years or more.

Suppose we had no churches, no houses, no furniture or clothes, no tame animals like the horse or ox, who had been trained to work for us, no tools, no machinery, no books, hardly a language even, and no idea of how to go to work to make any thing.

Just think how miserable and helpless we should be!

I showed you in some of the first chapters what a long, tiresome process it was to find out some of the things which seem so easy to us, such as making a

fire, and using wheels. If you remember that, I think you will begin to get a little idea of how much we owe to all the people who have lived before us, because they have made it possible for us to begin, not where they began, but where they left off.

Now would it not be the best thing in the world if each one of us could do a little to make it easier and better for those who come after us, and so help pay the great debt which we owe to those who came before us?

You see when we owe a debt to our country and to all the people whose thoughts have helped us, it is such a very, very large debt that we could not possibly pay it. If we did the most that we could, we should have scarcely begun to pay it.

We can never pay those who have lived before us and are dead, and the most we can do is to pass along to others the good things which have come to us, and to try to help those who come after us, as we have been helped by the people who lived before us.

Here is a sweet little story, which is a true one, and will show you just what I mean.

Most of the black people who live at the South are poor, and many of them have not been to school much, for they have had to work hard all their lives, and have had no chance to learn.

A few kind persons at the North have given

money to provide schools for them, and, at a place called Hampton, there is a fine, large school, where many colored people are studying hard, and are learning to be teachers.

Some years ago, there was among these scholars a poor black girl who was very ill ; the doctors did not know what was the matter with her, and they thought she would die. A kind lady, who was a doctor, was visiting at Hampton, and she felt sorry for the poor girl, and she said she would help her. So she took her North, into her own home in New York, and treated the black girl as kindly as if she had been her sister.

She bathed her, fed her, watched over her, and studied her illness until she found what was the trouble, and then gave her medicine and took care of her for over a year, until she was strong and well.

The girl came to love this good lady very dearly, and when the time came for her to go back to the South again she said to her kind friend : "I wish I could do something for you to show you how much I thank you for being so very good to me. I have a little money, about a hundred dollars, which has been given me, and I want to give it to you ; I wish I could give you more, but I cannot, this is all I have."

But the doctor answered : "Oh, no, Mollie ; you must not give me your money. I don't want to be

paid ; that is not the Christian way to do ; when people do you a kindness, you must not pay them back, you must pass it along to some one else who needs it. Now, instead of paying me, you must pay the debt by working for your people ; you must pass along to them whatever I have done for you."

So the girl went South. She was very small, but as she was old enough and knew enough to teach, she found a school and went to work. About two years later, the doctor went South again, and Mollie came to see her, and brought her a nice present of a cake and some eggs and dried currants. She was as happy as she could be to see her kind friend again, and began telling her about her school.

She said the children she taught were very poor and ragged ; their mothers did not know how to sew, and therefore she had started two sewing classes for the mothers and the girls, and taught them on Saturdays and in the evenings, although she was very tired from teaching all day in the school. Sometimes she mended the children's clothes herself, so they could come to school neat and tidy. Their mothers did not teach them to keep clean at home, so she kept a basin of water and some towels at school, and taught them to wash their faces and hands.

On Sunday they had no Sunday-school, and there was no one to teach them about God, so she started a Sunday-school herself, and taught them as she did

on all the other days of the week ; she got very tired, but she said she was glad to do it, for they were so ignorant and so glad to learn.

“I hope you get a good salary, I am sure,” said the lady. “You ought to be well paid when you work so hard.”

“Oh, no,” said the girl, very simply, “I have no salary ; I work for nothing.”

“Why, how can that be ?” asked the lady, in surprise.

“Oh, you see,” said Mollie, “*that was what you did for me, and so I have passed it along.*”

The tears filled the lady’s eyes, and mine too, when she told me the story, and we thought of this sweet, unselfish girl, who found her greatest joy in making one little corner of the world better and happier, because she was so thankful for what had been done for her.

You little folks cannot do great things like this ; you cannot take care of sick people, as the doctor did, nor teach poor children, as Mollie did, and you cannot give much money away ; but let us see if there not some very important things you can do if you mean to be kind and “lend a hand.”

Of course the best way to begin to lend a helping hand is by trying to be thoughtful and kind about all sorts of little every-day matters at home.

It shows a great deal more real kindness for you to take pains and step softly and try to amuse the

baby when mamma has a headache, than it does to give a great many handsome Christmas presents to your friends.

For probably the money for the presents would have been given to you, and there is no kindness in giving what costs us nothing. No doubt you can yourself think of dozens of ways of doing many little helpful things at home, so I will tell you only of some things which you can do to "lend a hand" in the great world outside of home, where there are so many people who need what you can give them.

I think you will find that you can pass along to them a great many of the good things which have come into your life.

If you go to the public school, you no doubt see there some little children who do not dress very well, and some who come from homes where they are not taught good manners.

Now there are many kind little ways in which you can make the child with patched, old-fashioned clothes feel that you think just as much of him as though he were well dressed, and there are many ways in which you can make your good manners induce others to be polite.

When children thoughtlessly get together, and whisper secrets about their mates, and look at each other and laugh as if they were making sport of the others, a polite, kind-hearted child will easily see that this is not doing as she would be done by, and

will have no share in such rudeness. It will not take you long to think of many ways in which you can help the teacher by saving her trouble, and by a sunny face and friendly manners make all the children happy when they are with you.

But now let me tell you of some of the ways in which you can send help to those whom you never see. In the South, where so many colored people live, there are many places where the people are so poor that they cannot afford to have schools more than two or three months of the year. The children live in poor little cabins, and have no pictures or nice books, and nothing to make their dull, hard life beautiful.

Now one of the things which you could easily do, would be to get all the charming picture papers and magazines which you and your friends take, and send to these poor little children, who never saw a *Youth's Companion*, or *St. Nicholas*, or *Wide Awake*, and very likely never even had a Christmas card.

It would not cost a great deal to send a package of these, or to send one at a time as they come to you. If you really care much about it, you can easily interest the older people to help you about it, and find just where to send them.

If you live in the country, perhaps you can have a little flower-garden of your own, and raise flowers to send into town to the Flower Mission, which takes

them to the sick people in the hospitals. I know of some little folks who do this, and of others who make picture scrap-books to send to the Children's Hospital.

If you live in a large city, there are no doubt hundreds of children within a mile of you who are often cold and hungry, and who not once in the year have so good a time as you have every day.

Of course you cannot go alone to their homes, so you cannot often see them, but there are some ways in which you can help them if you really care much about doing so.

I will tell you a true story of what one little girl only eight years old did. She had two cents given her to start with, and she thought she would see how much she could earn with it all by herself. So she bought some mending cotton with it, and darned stockings, for which her mother paid her, so that with her own hands she earned enough to buy a dress for a poor child.

All these things seem rather small, but they are not too small for Him who notices even a sparrow's fall, to see and remember them. And the best thing about lending a helping hand, is that one little kindness leads to another, so that when a good thing is begun it goes on and makes kind thoughts and pleasant deeds, and one can never tell when it will end.

And now, with this last thought, we must say good-bye.

I hope I have helped to straighten out and put in order in your mind some of the many things which you have wondered about and only half understood.

I hope that this wonderful earth, with its strange history, will be more interesting to you than ever before, and that you will want to "lend a hand" to help make it better in the time to come than it ever was in the past.

I have tried to pass along to you little thinkers, the greatest thoughts I know. If you once get them into your heads and hearts, you can never be really poor, for these are the best things there are, and they are free to all.

" 'T is heaven alone, that is given away.

"T is only God may be had for the asking."





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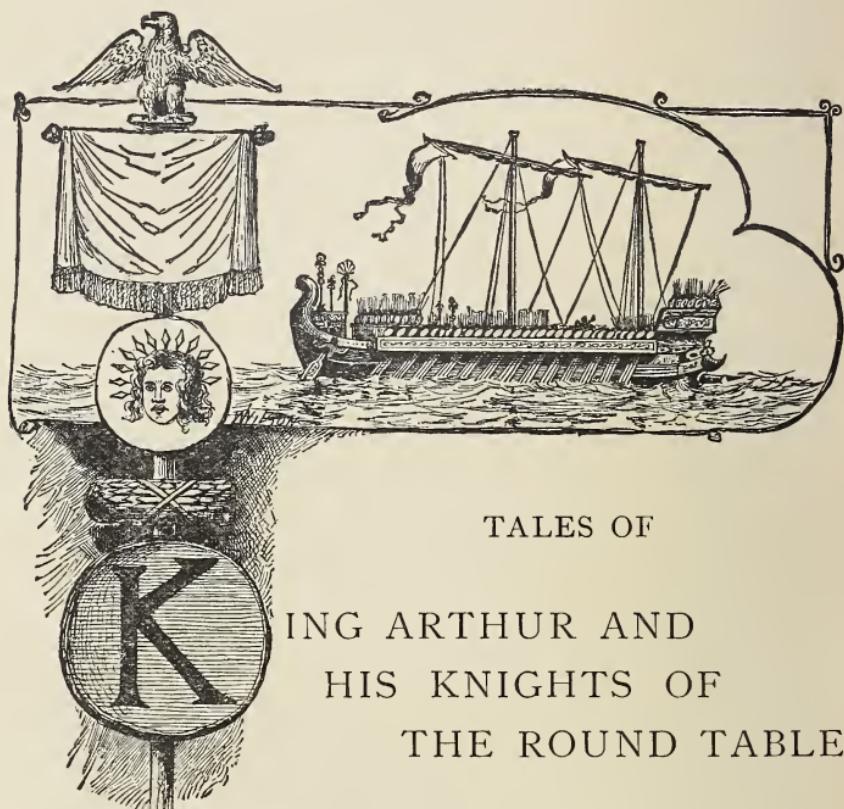
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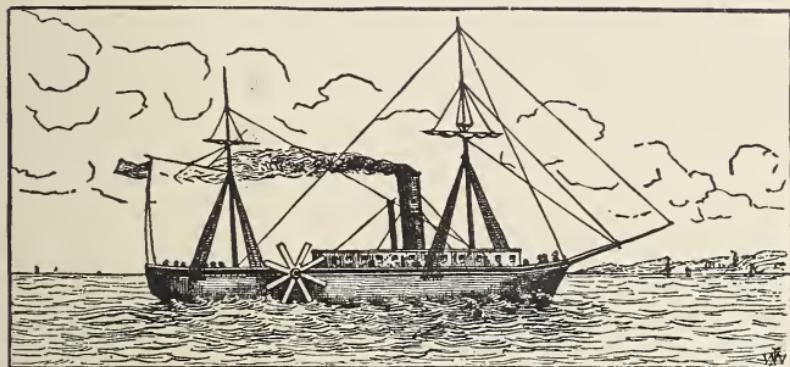
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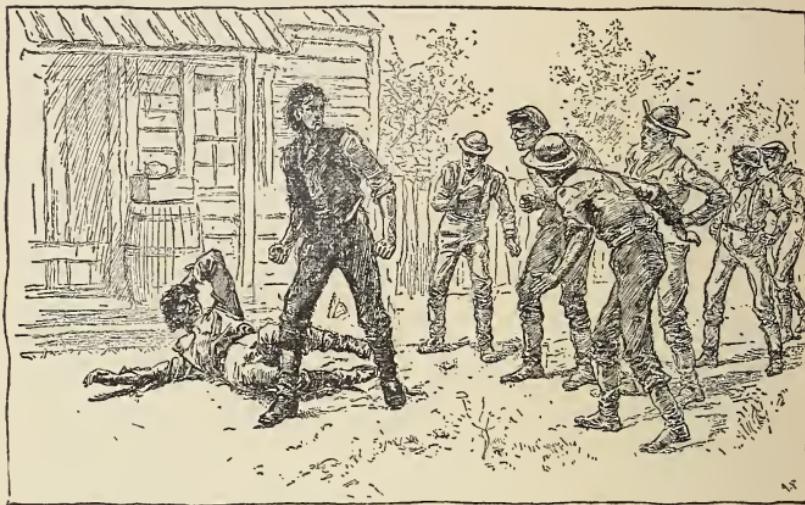
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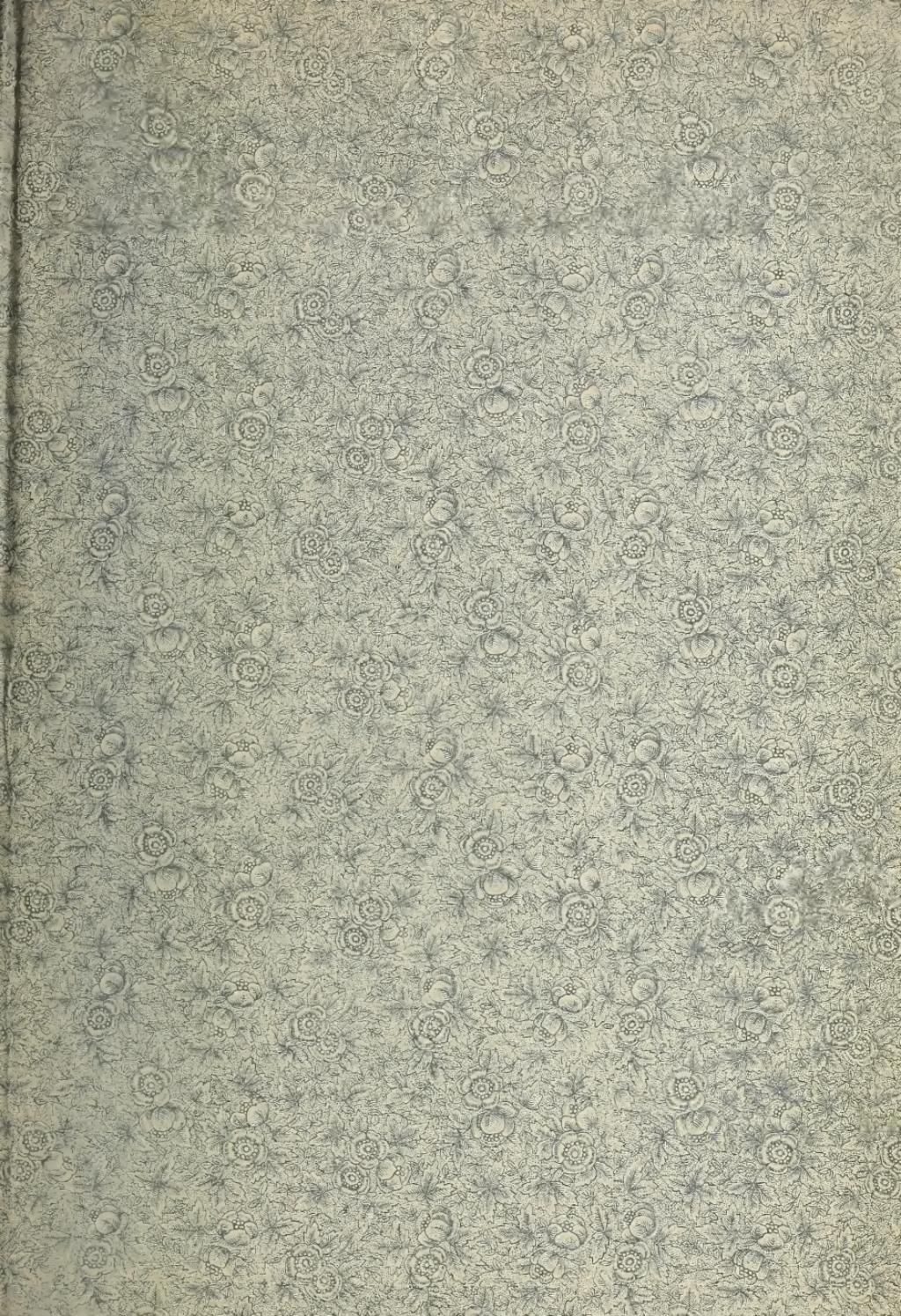
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